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## **American Social Problems**

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA

Student Manual Series

EDITED BY

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Catholic University of America

. . .

AMERICAN SOCIAL PROBLEMS  
*by* Mary Elizabeth Walsh, Ph.D.

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*by* George T. Brown, Ph.D.

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# American Social Problems

by

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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## Preface

The Commission on American Citizenship was established under the auspices of the Catholic University of America as a result of the suggestions made by the late Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, to the members of the American hierarchy, urging that greater attention be paid to education in the social studies as part of the development of good citizenship. The Rector of the University, Most Rev. Joseph Corrigan, accepted the presidency of the Commission and the work was organized under an Executive Committee consisting of Rt. Rev. Francis J. Haas, Rev. Dr. George Johnson, and Dr. Robert H. Connery, the latter also serving as Director of the Commission. Among the various projects undertaken to carry out the mandate of the American Catholic hierarchy is a series of college student manuals in the social studies. This volume, one of the series, is devoted, as its title indicates, to an examination of American social problems, a field which is both exceedingly broad and complicated by serious issues of moral and practical significance.

Every effort has been made in this outline to correlate two things, (*a*) the observed facts of social science, and (*b*) Catholic teaching. Without the former a discussion of social problems would be unrealistic; without the latter such discussion would be empty of supernatural significance and consequently lose its chief value for Catholic students. Hence the writer has spared no effort in undertaking this difficult task of correlation.

To Reverend Dr. Paul Hanly Furfey, Head of the Department of Sociology at Catholic University of America, must be given full credit for all points of theology touched on in this outline. The writer appealed to him constantly for advice on matters of theology and without his unsparing interest and

coöperation the outline could not have been attempted much less brought to a conclusion. In addition to the theological help so necessary for a lay person in a task like this, Professor Furfey read and discussed the various chapters with the writer, thus contributing valuable points of insight from his broad background of knowledge.

Monsignor Francis J. Haas, Dean of the School of Social Science, Catholic University of America, went far beyond his duties as editor of this series and much appreciation is due him. He read each chapter carefully, suggested extensive revisions and gave the outline the benefit of his wide experience in the field of social science. His assistance was particularly valuable for the three chapters on problems growing out of economic conditions but the entire outline was considerably improved by his suggestions.

Appreciation is likewise due to Professor Robert H. Connery, Director of the Commission on American Citizenship; to Dr. Walter L. Willigan, Chairman of the Department of Social Studies, St. John's University, Brooklyn, N. Y.; to Professor Percy A. Robert of the Department of Sociology at Catholic University of America, for reading the manuscript and for many helpful suggestions. Dr. Connery was particularly helpful on matters of style and general criticism; Dr. Willigan, for bibliographic material; and Dr. Robert, on matters of sociology proper. Professor George T. Brown, of the Department of Economics, Catholic University of America, also read Chapters VIII, IX, and X, and made helpful suggestions.

Finally acknowledgment must be made to the following who gave permission to reproduce certain material: Brookings Institution, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Central Bureau, Catholic Central Verein of America, American Book Company, Macmillan, Prentice-Hall, Harper, D. Appleton-Century, D. C. Heath, Little, Brown, Houghton Mifflin, University of Chicago Press, Events Publishing Company, Inc., *American Journal of Sociology*, *Mental Hygiene*, Preservation Press, and Pax, *A Catholic Monthly*.

All in all, the writer has received generous and stimulating assistance on all sides. However, she must accept full responsibility for final decisions regarding materials used and form of organization of the manual.

M. E. W.

April 21, 1942





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## Foreword

As these lines are being written the problems of national defense are very much in the foreground of public discussion. Every true American wants his native land to be safe from foreign invasion, and he is equally anxious that the democratic ideals for which America stands shall prevail throughout the world.

Everyone must remember that a genuine defense of democracy implies a willingness to make democracy work. No number of guns and airplanes and battleships will make the world safe for democracy if democracy itself decays from internal faults. To make democracy work calls for eternal vigilance and eternal effort. It calls also for the determination that the social problems which trouble the American scene shall be solved.

That is why a book on social problems and their solution is so timely at present. The good citizen must learn to face these problems squarely, to estimate their seriousness without bias, to study their causes earnestly, and to apply himself generously to their solution. There has perhaps never been a time in the history of the United States when effort of this sort has been more necessary.

Dr. Walsh has written a helpful book. Her training and experience as a social worker have given her expert familiarity with social problems. Her study of sociology has given her insight into causes and breadth of view. Her work among the very poor at Il Poverello House and Fides House have trained her in the techniques of personalist action. As a result her work is sound, realistic, and stimulating. It is at once thoroughly up to date and thoroughly Catholic.

This book should do a great deal of good. It should stimulate the student not only to understand social problems intellectually, but to give himself to efforts at solving them.

PAUL HANLY FURFEY

## **American Social Problems**



## Chapter I

### THE NATURE OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

THE UNITED STATES has many unsolved social problems. Today, when there is so much discussion of the democratic way of life, it is pertinent to study them. No form of government can survive unless it is able to meet the domestic problems of labor and capital, crime and delinquency, poverty and race relations, as well as those of the international sphere. The question of the present war and the ultimate peace is in the forefront of national consciousness. As the military preparation of the nation grows in volume and gathers momentum sociological tension can be felt on all sides. The tremendous strain on our economic system and the post-war conditions which can be readily foreseen threaten our democratic institutions and intensify existing social problems.

If this country is to preserve its ideals of democracy its citizens must take a vital interest in social questions. Each should try to understand the nature and causes of social problems and the principles which must underlie a satisfactory solution. Catholics are urged by the Holy Father to face these issues and take an active part in reforming the social order. Thus both Church and civic leaders stress the need of intelligent social action. This is a true national defense. No military force can make a country really safe if the citizens are dissatisfied and restless on account of unsolved social problems. Such unsolved problems are a menacing threat to democracy and the patriotic citizen will always consider it his duty to do his part towards solving them.

## WHAT IS A SOCIAL PROBLEM?

It is obviously difficult to discuss social problems intelligently unless one understands precisely what the term itself means. It is therefore somewhat disconcerting to find that there is little agreement among sociologists on the definition of a social problem. A first step, then, will be to examine the various proposed definitions and agree on a valid one.

*The Common-Sense Definition.* One of the simplest possible definitions is given by L. K. Frank. He says, "A social problem . . . appears to be any difficulty or misbehavior of a fairly large number of persons which we wish to remove or correct."<sup>1</sup> Gillette and Reinhardt hold a similar view: "A social problem is a collective difficulty which the total public or some constituent group of public thinks exists."<sup>2</sup> These are common-sense definitions. They define the term in a general way which would be satisfactory to the man in the street; but they are not exact enough for the reflective student. Both definitions state that a problem is a "difficulty"; but what is a "difficulty"? Is it not, after all, about the same thing as a "problem"? Thus the thing defined is merely restated in the definition, which is bad logical practice. Then both definitions imply that a problem is a problem because "we" or "the public" wish to remove it. This viewpoint is hard to defend. Normally, of course, the public is conscious of its problems and wants to see them solved; but this public attitude is not essential to the definition. A problem might still be a problem even if the public were not conscious of it.

*The Mores as a Norm.* Another group of writers define a social problem in terms of the mores, that is. the customs of a

<sup>1</sup> L. K. Frank, "Social Problems," *Am. J. of Sociol.*, 30:463, January, 1925.

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Gillette and J. M. Reinhardt. *Current Social Problems* (New York, American Book Co., 1937), p. 4.



people. Thus Phelps says of social problems, "They are handicaps to the achievement of that which society chooses to call 'normal social life'."<sup>3</sup> Bossard's viewpoint is similar. He speaks of social problems as "constituting a threat to social well-being . . . as defined by the mores of the group."<sup>4</sup> This view is rather widely held, but it is nevertheless indefensible. The customs of a people form a very uncertain standard. A problem is no less a problem because it is long standing and widespread. For example, there have been city governments in which graft and bribery have been so common, so deeply rooted, in fact, so customary that they might fairly be called part of the city's mores. But they did not cease to be social problems for that reason.

*Organization as the Norm.* Another definition is built around the concept of organization. Thus Elliott and Merrill write:

We have spoken of a *disorganized*, rather than a *pathological*, individual, family, or community. We realize that this may seem merely to be substituting one norm for another, a standard of social organization for that of social health. But the implications of this distinction go farther than this . . . We believe that any fruitful study of the nature of social disorganization must be based on an analysis of social organization and social processes.<sup>5</sup>

Here society is conceived as an ordered and organized whole. As long as it remains thus organized there are no social problems. But if something disturbs this order, then the resulting disorganization is a problem and calls for solution. This

<sup>3</sup> H. A. Phelps, *Contemporary Social Problems* (New York, Prentice-Hall, 1939), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. S. Bossard, *Social Change and Social Problems* (New York, Harper, 1938), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> M. A. Elliott and F. E. Merrill, *Social Disorganization* (New York, Harper, 1934), p. xiv. See also Stuart A. Queen, "The Concepts Social Disorganization and Social Participation," *Am. Sociol. Rev.*, 6:307-316, June, 1941.

definition constitutes an improvement over the ones previously cited. It implies that there is such a thing as an ordered, normal society and problems are conceived as deviations from this norm. But is organization the best norm to use? It is indeed true that when society is well organized, when the State, the family, and other social groups are efficient, social problems are less likely to arise. Again, when these groups break down and society becomes disorganized, problems are very likely to increase. But this does not mean that social problems and lack of social organization are identical. Even a well organized society will have to combat feeble-mindedness, crime, and insanity, although it is in a better position to meet the social problems which thus arise than a disorganized society would be. Social organization is a useful concept to bear in mind when considering social problems; but it is not sufficient to constitute a definition.

*The Norm of Up-to-Dateness.* Other sociologists have tried to frame a definition in terms of social change. For example, Mangold writes, "Our social problems constitute phases of cultural evolution."<sup>6</sup> Again, Gillin, Dittmer, and Colbert have this to say:

By virtue of the fact that our social institutions are slow to change, and because of the difficulty confronting such a large part of the population in its efforts to keep pace with the demands of the times, there appear vast and baffling maladjustments. It is with these maladjustments that our study of social problems is concerned.<sup>7</sup>

It is true enough that modern society is a rapidly changing society. It is true also that individuals who cannot adjust themselves to these changes are likely to suffer from maladjustment. The worker who loses his job with the introduction of a

<sup>6</sup> From G. B. Mangold, *Social Pathology* (By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers), p. viii.

<sup>7</sup> J. L. Gillin, C. G. Dittmer, and R. J. Colbert, *Social Problems* (New York, Century, 1932), p. 44.

machine may suffer from poverty unless he can adjust himself to the changed conditions and get new employment. Old-fashioned parents who live in a different world from their children may find the latter difficult to control unless they can learn to see sympathetically the problems of youth in a changing world. Maladjustment is the price of change. Yet it is going too far to identify social problems with this type of maladjustment. Even the most stable and unchanging society has its problems. A static society may have a smaller crime problem than a rapidly changing one; yet crimes occur even in the most static society.

*The Optimum Standard.* Ford comes closer to the truth when he considers social problems in the light of an optimum standard.<sup>8</sup> Assuming that the word *problem* implies that something is wrong, the logical way to discover what is wrong is to ask first what is right. In other words, social problems imply deviations from some sort of a standard of what a good society ought to be. The concept *social problems* is only intelligible when there exists some sort of a parallel concept of social rightness, some norm against which these problems may be measured. It is unfortunate that Ford does not go on to give a clear concept of what this norm should be. It is necessary to discuss this concept of a good society before a good definition of social problems can be formulated.

### WHAT IS A GOOD SOCIETY?

*Society Defined.* The word *society* is here used in its most general sense. It is not to be identified with the State or any other particular society. Even in this general sense society can be defined as a group of human beings organized for some common purpose. There are three elements in this definition:

<sup>8</sup> J. Ford, *Social Deviation* (New York, Macmillan, 1939), Chapter I.

(1) Human beings. A herd of animals does not form a society even though they may show interesting analogies to the phenomena of human association. (2) Organization. This organization is very clear in specific societies such as the State, a debating society, a business corporation or a family. It is less clear when the word *society* is used in the present general sense. Yet such organization exists. Society as a whole exhibits organization, mostly in the form of the groups which it contains, the State, the family, and so on and in a plurality of more informal organizations.<sup>9</sup> (3) Purpose or motive. There are a great many different types of societies depending on the purpose for which men organize, business societies organized to make money, political parties organized to elect candidates to office, and the like. The total purpose of society as a whole must be to help its members attain their supreme purpose. This, by Catholic teaching, is the attainment of happiness through a virtuous life in this world and an eternal reward in the next. All types of social organization must be subordinated to this end. A corporation manufacturing men's shoes is not a good society if through economic injustice it interferes with this supreme end. A State is not a good society if it offers occasions of sin through widespread bribery and corruption. A good society is one which furthers the supreme purpose of man, directly or indirectly.

*Social Problems.* A social problem is whatever interferes with the legitimate purposes of a good society. The term includes then any social phenomenon which disturbs the tranquillity of the State, upsets the just workings of an ordered

<sup>9</sup> "Later social theory . . . has tended to divorce it (society) more and more from the state alone and to find a plurality of manifestations for it. . . . At the same time the tendency has been to find that the basis of social reality lies deeper than in the state itself in something like a consensus, explicit or implicit, of the members of the community." From T. Parsons, "Society" in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers), 14:230.

economic system, or, in general, interferes with the efforts of the citizens to lead normal, just, ordered lives. Note that it must be a *social* phenomenon. Purely individual problems are not included here. If one person becomes insane and can be adequately cared for by his own family, that is not a social problem. But if he becomes violently insane and commits a murder, then society must step in and restrain him. A social problem has arisen.

It is worth noting that social problems may arise in either of two ways: (1) The end which a group seeks may itself be wrong. A criminal gang constitutes a social problem because the end it seeks is inconsistent with the purpose of a good society. It is organized to spread violence and injustice. (2) The end sought may be right but a social problem arises because the society itself is inefficient. A glass factory has the legitimate and useful purpose of earning money for the owners and employees by manufacturing useful articles. But if this factory is so inefficiently run that the workers cannot be paid a living wage, then it constitutes a social problem.

*Types of Societies.* Since social problems imply the disorder of a *society*, it is important in this connection to inquire what the principal types of societies are. They may conveniently be divided into four, the Church, civil society, the family, and various other associations.

(1) The Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, has for its purpose the spiritual development of its members and their closer union with Christ, the Head of the Body. The Church is "a society of the supernatural order and of universal extent; a perfect society, because it has in itself all the means required for its own end, which is the eternal salvation of mankind; hence it is supreme in its own domain."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical, *Rappresentanti in terra* (Christian education of youth), December 31, 1929.

(2) Civil society has as its purpose to preserve peace and to maintain those other normal external conditions which make the good life possible. "Civil society is a perfect society, having in itself all the means to its peculiar end, which is the temporal well-being of the community; and so, in this respect, that is, in view of the common good, it has preëminence over the family, which finds its own suitable temporal perfection precisely in civil society."<sup>11</sup> It is easy to see how any factor which interferes with the orderly business of civil government will constitute a social problem as above defined.

(3) Domestic society, the family, was "instituted directly by God for its peculiar purpose, the generation and formation of offspring; for this reason it has priority of nature and therefore of rights over civil society."<sup>12</sup> The basic importance of the family is obvious. It is a familiar truism that sound family life is essential to a well ordered society. Anything that disturbs family life is therefore a social problem.

(4) Besides the three basic societies, the Church, the State, the family, there exist a wide variety of other ones. For example there are economic societies, partnerships, corporations, labor unions, trade associations, chambers of commerce. There are recreational groups, such as country clubs, fraternal orders, Greek-letter societies. There are cultural groups, such as the various educational associations, learned societies, societies devoted to the promotion of poetry, art, music. There are organizations of political significance, political parties, peace associations, pressure groups formed to further the interests of some particular faction. Most of these have their legitimate function and can play their part in an ordered society. Indeed, in the interests of good order the activities of these smaller groups should be encouraged; for they concentrate on some one specialized function and can therefore often perform it better than

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

could the State. Then, too, since these groups can be quickly and informally organized they give room for individual initiative and experimentation. Whenever a given function can be performed efficiently by these smaller bodies, it should be turned over to them. "It is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies." <sup>13</sup>

For an ordered social life there must be constant coöperation between the various types of societies mentioned in the previous paragraphs. Of course they do not all coöperate on the same basis. There exists a hierarchy of dignity among them. The lower yields to the higher. The State has the right to coerce a business firm when the latter, by unjust practices, interferes with the more important purposes of the State. In the hierarchy of societies the Church occupies the highest position. "Just as the end at which the Church aims is by far the noblest of ends, so is its authority the most exalted of all authority, nor can it be looked upon as inferior to the civil power, or in any manner dependent upon it." <sup>14</sup> The Church must therefore be left free, in her rightful jurisdiction, from interference by the State in order to pursue her own ends. State and Church are both perfect societies, each supreme in its own sphere. Each can pursue its own ends independently of the other. But when there is conflict between the vital interests of the two bodies, justice requires that the rights of the Church should have precedence. Thus it would be unjust for the State to close the parochial schools on the plea that a unified educational system is desirable. The right relationship between all the varied types of societies is a primary requisite

<sup>13</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical, *Quadragesimo anno* (Social reconstruction), May 15, 1931.

<sup>14</sup> Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical, *Immortale Dei* (Christian constitution of states), November 1, 1885.

of a good social order. Disturbance of this right relationship is itself a social problem.

#### PROBLEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENT BOOK

As the reader will easily realize, social problems exist in a bewildering variety. There are many types of societies and each of these has its own problems. Obviously only certain ones can be selected for treatment. It is important at the outset to understand the basis of this selection.

(1) Problems of the purely spiritual order will be omitted. Since the Church is in the fullest sense a society, factors which interfere with her work can be social problems in the strict sense of the definition. For example it is really a social problem if Catholics fail to go to Mass and participate fully in it. Such problems will be excluded, however, except where they also have significance in the temporal order.

(2) Since this text is written primarily for sociology students, certain problems will be omitted as belonging more properly to other social sciences. Economic problems will be treated only in so far as they have immediate social significance. Therefore such a question as the functioning of the Federal Reserve System with whatever problems it may involve will be left to the economists. Little will be said about inefficient government, because, although social problems thus arise, the matter belongs more properly to the sphere of politics. The social problems of the American Indian are better handled by the anthropologist who has the training to appreciate these problems against the Indian's peculiar cultural background.

(3) Only the more important social problems will be considered. So many problems actually exist that it would be impossible to treat all of them even in the most summary manner.

(4) Only American problems will be considered. Social



problems vary greatly with the country involved. The crime problem and the methods for meeting it are different in the United States, Ecuador, and Japan. There are comparatively few statements which will hold for all the countries of the globe. Therefore only social problems of this country will be considered as being of most immediate interest.

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For the basic issues discussed in this chapter the papal encyclicals are naturally of prime importance. Besides those already mentioned in the footnotes, the following are essential: POPE LEO XIII, Encyclical, *Rerum novarum* (Condition of the working classes), May 15, 1891; POPE PIUS XI, Encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge* (Church in Germany), March 14, 1937; POPE PIUS XI, Encyclical,

*Divini Redemptoris* (Atheistic communism), March 19, 1937; and POPE PIUS XII, Encyclical, *Summi pontificatus* (Function of the State in the modern world), October 20, 1939. Very important also for its application to the United States is the statement of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, *The Church and Social Order* (Washington, D. C., National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1940). See also the older statement by the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council, *Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction* (Washington, National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1919).

At the outset the student should familiarize himself with the principal reference books useful in the study of social problems. Particularly useful is SELIGMAN, E. R. A. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York, Macmillan, 1930-35). General encyclopaedias published in this country are often useful such as the *Encyclopedia Americana* (New York, Americana Corporation, 1936), and the *New International Encyclopaedia* (New York, Dodd, 1922-30). There are several annual reference books, very useful in keeping up-to-date. Among these the most notable are: *World Almanac* (New York, World-Telegram, published annually); *American Yearbook: A Record of Events and Progress* (New York, American Yearbook Corporation, published annually); *Americana Annual* (New York, Americana Corporation, published annually), and *New International Year Book* (New York, Funk, published annually). For the very latest information the student should learn to use the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *New York Times Index*.

## Chapter II

### APPROACHES TO STUDY AND TREATMENT

THERE ARE certain general questions of method which need to be considered before specific social problems are discussed. These are very important. Unless valid methods of study are used the whole viewpoint will be biased; unless adequate methods of treatment are used, social problems will not be properly solved.

#### APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are various ways to approach the study of social problems. This is clear from even a cursory examination of the standard texts. Older treatments emphasized theory. They gave rather philosophical discussions of the nature of social problems and of man's ability to control them. The newer textbooks emphasize the scientific method. They quote statistics, monographs, surveys. They stress the necessity of getting accurate facts about the present status of social problems. In addition, Catholic treatments use theological sources, such as the encyclicals or the works of moral theologians. There are thus three approaches to the study of social problems, the theological, the philosophical, and the approach of natural science.

There is a good deal of discussion among the proponents of these various methods. It is easy to understand why non-Catholic authors should not use theological sources; it is less

easy to see why many of them should exclude all social theory. Social theory can be easily abused. Theory is no substitute for the laborious task of digging out facts. Yet without some background of theory it is scarcely possible to orient oneself properly towards social problems, or even to define the term, as the preceding chapter shows. There is even a certain amount of discussion among Catholic sociologists as to how much emphasis should be placed on distinctively Catholic doctrine in the sociology classroom. Some feel, for instance, that the peculiarly Catholic teaching on marriage and the family should not be discussed by the sociologist, but should be handed over completely to the religion teacher. There seems to be little justification for these differences of opinion. In approaching a given problem it seems logical, after all, to use all the valid methods which will throw light on it. The real difficulty is to give the proper emphasis to each technique. This point calls for some discussion.<sup>1</sup>

*The Theological Approach.* No Catholic can neglect the data of Revelation when he approaches the study of social problems. He knows that such data are true in exactly the same sense that any other facts are true. Therefore when the data of Revelation bear on some social problem they must be taken into account precisely like any other facts. Moreover these revealed truths answer some of the most basic questions with which the sociologist has to deal. They reveal the true end and purpose of society. They make clear the true nature of charity and the rôle of grace in rebuilding the social order. To omit such truths in the sociology classroom, or to relegate them to a secondary position, is scarcely a Catholic attitude.

There are, of course, many books to which one may turn

<sup>1</sup> For a general treatment of the relative place of the three approaches in sociology, see P. H. Furfey, "Why a Supernatural Sociology?", *Am. Cath. Sociol. Rev.*, 1:167-171, December, 1940.

for an exposition of Catholic doctrine. For serious research, however, it is necessary to go to the primary and authoritative sources. Even the beginning student should know something of the richness of these sources and the light which they throw on the nature and solution of social problems.

Among all these sources the Holy Scriptures are naturally first in dignity. The Old Testament is rich in social thought. Moses was perhaps the first labor leader known to history. The prophets were loud in their denunciations of social injustice and many of their burning utterances have a decidedly modern ring. The sapiential books are full of profound reflections on human relationships. In the New Testament Our Lord gives us the picture of a great social entity, the Kingdom of God. Its members must separate themselves in spirit from the world. They must renounce avarice, evil ambition, and hatred. They must be just and charitable. These virtues constituted a direct attack on the social problems of slavery, war, and economic injustice. By reforming marriage and raising it to the dignity of a sacrament, Christ laid the foundations of the Christian home. The Apostles developed and applied these teachings. In the Apocalypse, St. John gives a broad picture of the struggle between the world and the Kingdom of God with the ultimate triumph of the latter.

The earliest Fathers wrote in the days when Christianity was a proscribed religion. The Church was politically powerless, so there was no occasion to take a stand in regard to public affairs. But the internal life of the Christian community was developed in all its beauty. The ideal of the Mystical Body was constantly mentioned and the group of believers presented a shining example of a good society. With the coming of Constantine, the Christian emperor, the Church emerged from the catacombs and began to be significant in public life. St. Basil organized almsgiving on a grand scale. St. Augustine wrote a

profound book, the *De civitate Dei*, about the influence of the Church on public affairs.

After the effects of the barbarian invasions had died down, a great Christian civilization arose in Europe. By this time Christians had had many centuries of experience in public life and a great tradition of Christian social thought had gradually developed. The scholastic philosophers and theologians systematized this tradition. Some of the underlying principles of Catholic social teaching have never been stated more clearly than they were stated by St. Thomas Aquinas. His works have been a mine of information for later writers.

The decay of scholasticism was followed by the Protestant Reformation. In the controversies which ensued Catholics were called upon to defend their principles against sharp and persistent attack. The modern period of history had begun and some of these controversies bore on distinctly modern questions such as the relation between the Church and the growing nationalistic States or the moral issues presented by mercantile capitalism. A great school of theologians developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Men like Suarez and Bellarmine showed to what extent the new social order could be conciliated with Catholic principles and to what extent the new ideas were erroneous.

With the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries new social problems were thrust to the fore. Sociology began to be cultivated as a separate discipline. A new social Catholic movement arose. It received the enthusiastic approval of the Holy See. With the reign of Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) a series of great social encyclicals began to appear.<sup>2</sup> Later Popes have continued the series. Practically all phases of the social question have been covered. The great

<sup>2</sup>It is noteworthy that Pope Leo XIII's first social encyclical, *Inscrutabili Dei consilio* (Evils of society), was published April 21, 1878, only two months after his elevation to the papacy.

value of the encyclicals lies in their timeliness and their authoritative character. They not only present Catholic social doctrine in the abstract; they also apply it to concrete modern issues. The encyclicals are not *ex-cathedra* pronouncements.<sup>3</sup> They are, however an exercise of the teaching authority of the Supreme Pontiff and an encyclical may impose on the consciences of Catholics the obligation of accepting a doctrine in a matter of faith or morals even without constituting an *ex-cathedra* definition.<sup>4</sup> Ordinarily, however, the encyclicals do not present their teaching in this solemn manner. Yet even in this ordinary case the positive and unqualified statements contained in these documents must be accepted with the obedience and interior assent due from every Catholic to the Holy See.<sup>5</sup> The encyclicals therefore are a most important source of Catholic social teaching.

The lives of the saints are another source. They show the Church's social teaching applied to the individual life. When the Church canonizes a saint, she does not necessarily approve every particular action of the saint's life. Yet she does give the life her general approval as an example for us. It is safe to assume, then, that attitudes on social problems and methods of treatment which are general among the saints may be accepted as representing the mind of the Church. For example, when the saints had contact with the poor, they were uniformly generous towards them and treated them as warm personal friends. This fact must be borne in mind when approaching the problem of

<sup>3</sup> This is true up to the present. There is, however, no reason why the Pope should not define a dogma *ex cathedra* in an encyclical if he chose to do so.

<sup>4</sup> For example in the case of Pope Pius X, Encyclical, *Pascendi dominici gregis* (Modernism), September 8, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> On this point see E. Manganot, "Encycliques" in A. Vacant and E. Manganot (eds.), *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (Paris, Letouzey, 1909- ), 5:14-16. See also the strong statement of Pope Leo XIII in the chapter "On the Chief Duties of Christians as Citizens" in *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York, Benziger, 1903), pp. 194-95.

poverty. It throws light on the true Catholic attitude on the problem and suggests some elements in a satisfactory solution.<sup>6</sup>

*The Philosophical Method.* The application of the philosophical method to social issues is generally known as social theory. The use of human reason can discover many truths which are helpful in understanding social problems and their solution. This is particularly true in the field of social ethics. Reason can distinguish between right and wrong in group life as well as in the life of the individual. In discussing social problems it is essential to know what is right and just. Otherwise it would be hard to know in what direction the solution lay. The issue of collective bargaining would be very confused unless it were known that justice requires equality of bargaining power between employer and employee and a living wage for the worker. Without a clear theory on human rights and the dignity of human personality it would be hard to untangle the problem of race relations and state what the attitudes and practices of the various racial groups towards each other should be.

Social theory is easily abused. Sometimes it is used in fields where it is not applicable; for theorizing is no substitute for the hard labor of collecting facts. Sometimes social theory is faulty because it begins from invalid principles. No matter how clever a process of reasoning may be in itself, if it starts from false premises it will lead to a false conclusion. A writer on population problems may reason ever so keenly; but if he starts from the false assumption that contraception is justifiable his whole discussion will be vitiated.

It may be asked why a Catholic should bother with social theory at all since the revealed doctrine of the Church is a surer

<sup>6</sup> For an analysis of the saints' attitude towards the poor and its implications for modern social work, see M. E. Walsh, *The Saints and Social Work* (Silver Spring, Maryland, Preservation Press, 1937).



guide. There are two answers to this question. First of all, Revelation does not answer all the questions which the sociologist asks. It is necessary, therefore, to use reason as well as faith. In the second place, it is necessary to fall back upon human reason in dealing with unbelievers. The solution of social problems calls for the coöperation of Catholics and non-Catholics; for the Catholic group alone is far from having a majority in the United States. If Catholics merely quote the doctrines of their Church, outsiders remain unconvinced. But if they can show by logical argument that their proposals are reasonable and just, then non-Catholics will be willing to coöperate. Only on the basis of such general coöperation is it possible to solve social problems in a democratic country.

*The Scientific Method.* In the technical sense of the scholastics philosophy is itself a science (*scientia*); but in modern usage the word *science* generally has a quite different sense. According to this modern definition a science is an organized body of knowledge which includes generalizations based on observed and verifiable facts. Note that there are two elements in this definition. Science starts from verifiable facts. To say that today is a pleasant day is not to state a fact, but an opinion. Somebody else may feel that it is too hot or too cold. But to state that 1382 people live in the village of X is to state a verifiable fact. After all a sceptical person, if he is ambitious enough, can go and count them. Secondly, science makes generalizations. A telephone book is full of verifiable facts, but it is not science. A science must generalize. These generalizations are sometimes called natural laws.

The application of scientific methods to the study of society is social science. Some have questioned the possibility of doing this. It is indeed clear enough that social science can never reach the standard of exactitude which prevails in physics or astronomy. The human element is too uncertain to permit such

accuracy. Yet this does not imply that the scientific method must be banished from sociology. After all the two essentials to the definition of a science mentioned above can be found here too. The sociologist can gather verifiable facts and he can generalize. A census report is full of verifiable facts. To say that feeble-minded boys are somewhat more likely than normal boys to be led into delinquency is to state a valid generalization. It is true that such generalizations are less sweeping and less accurate than the laws of physics which can often be stated in the form of equations with mathematical exactitude. But this does not mean that there can be no social science at all. It means merely that social science is less exact than chemistry or physics.

Social science contributes materially towards the solution of problems. Social problems can be surveyed to determine their exact extent and nature. After measures of treatment have been tried, the problem can be again surveyed and the success of the measure can be thus assayed. In this way scientific methods are useful to the practical administrator as well as to the student. Social science has in this way brought about some of the most significant advances in the study and treatment of the problems of society.

#### APPROACHES TO THE TREATMENT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are two general methods of treating a social problem, organized action and personalistic action. Organized action implies action by a group. This group may be the State itself or the Church or again it may be some smaller organization formed perhaps for this specific purpose. Personalistic action refers to the social effect of the individual life lived in accordance with good social principles.

*Organized Action.* As already stated, the group which car-

ries out the attack on a social problem may be the State. Most State action of this sort comes under the head of social legislation. One thinks immediately of such measures as minimum-wage laws, old-age pensions, child-labor legislation, measures for the care of the blind, clinics administered by the State, and the like. However not all State measures attacking social problems can be classified as social legislation. For example, law-enforcement activities are a direct attack on the problem of crime; yet they are not usually put under this head.

The Church is another society which treats social problems as part of its ordinary activity. The sacramental life of the Church increases charity and this is in itself a remedy for social evils. Other activities are more directly and visibly directed against the problems of society. Religious communities run hospitals, homes for the aged, child-caring institutions, and other projects as part of their ordinary activity. Then there are societies such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society which, although not strictly a part of the Church, are still very closely associated with it. Thus, either directly or indirectly, the Church is responsible for a great amount of organized action.

Among the other organizations in the field, some have been formed for the specific purpose of combating social problems. The American Federation of Labor or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are examples. Again, there are societies organized primarily for some other purpose which nevertheless make their contribution in this field. A fraternal organization is formed primarily to promote fellowship and foster wholesome recreation. Yet such societies sometimes throw the weight of their influence behind some piece of good social legislation or they may offer sick benefits or life insurance to their members thus making their minor contribution towards the removal of the insecurity of the wage-earner.

It is of interest to inquire what problems are more effi-

ciently handled by the State and which are better left for the attention of private organizations. The general principle is that the State can better handle such problems as crime in which coercion is necessary and as very widespread poverty in which the expense is very heavy. On the other hand, there are many fields where private organizations are more effective than the State. In a non-Catholic country like ours where there is a very rigid separation of Church and State it is often necessary to organize unofficial groups to perform functions which might logically be performed by the State in a Catholic country. Child-caring institutions are founded by American Catholics because the State cannot always be trusted to take proper care of the religious training of children in its own institutions. Projects organized by the State tend to be rather rigid, since their activities are often closely bound by law and there is not sufficient room for free experimentation. A private organization can pioneer in new fields. Often when the experiment succeeds the State will adopt the idea and carry on the work. For example, the first public playgrounds were opened by private groups of interested individuals. When playgrounds proved their worth, public playgrounds became the rule. Finally, since the majority rules in a democratic country, the State does not always show a sufficient concern for the problems of minorities. Therefore it is often necessary for minority groups to take the initiative. Such groups may succeed in bringing their problems to the attention of the general public and then helpful legislation can be passed. Even so they may have to continue their activity when they find that social legislation does not solve all their problems. It would be easy to illustrate this from the history of organized labor.

In this connection it is well to bear in mind the principle stated above and approved by the Church that the preference should be given to unofficial organizations when there is doubt

whether a certain problem should be attacked by the State or by them.<sup>7</sup> It is easy to see the reason for this. If *all* social problems are turned over to the State, the activities of the government will be spread over so wide an area that there is danger that its attention will be distracted from its more essential and primary functions. Again, there is an advantage in preserving the flexibility which comes with a plurality of unofficial societies. True democracy implies not only that the majority shall rule in the government, but also that there shall be a plurality of channels through which the citizens can make their influence felt in the community.

*Personalistic Action.* This type of action is old, even though the term is rather new. In every age the personal influence of good men and women has had its weight in the attack on social problems. Everyone affects everyone else. No one can practice the social virtues without unconsciously leading others to imitate him. Because this sort of social action is subtle and often invisible it is easily overlooked, whereas the activities of organized groups inevitably attract attention. Yet in the long run personalistic action is enormously important. To disregard it in considering social problems is a very grave mistake.

The principle will be familiar to every reader of the encyclicals. They constantly stress individual reform as a means of social reform. In discussing social justice Pope Pius XI stresses the fact that each person must do his part. "It is of the very essence of social justice to demand from each individual all that is necessary for the common good."<sup>8</sup> In the same encyclical the practice of personal detachment from worldly goods is urged as defense against communism and as a "final and most efficacious remedy" the spirit of prayer and penance because "the evil which today torments humanity can be conquered" only by these means.

<sup>7</sup> See above, pp. 8-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Divini Redemptoris.*

The *Quadragesimo anno* speaks of personal reform, the "reform of manners." "All that We have taught about reconstructing and perfecting the social order will be of no avail without a reform of manners; of this history affords the clearest evidence." The same encyclical asserts that economic life cannot be rationalized without the parallel practice of the Christian virtues. "This order, which We Ourselves desire and make every effort to promote, will necessarily be quite faulty and imperfect, unless all man's activities harmoniously unite to imitate and, as far as is humanly possible, attain the marvelous unity of the divine plan."

The Popes have shown their approval of personalistic action by setting St. Francis of Assisi before Catholics as a model social reformer. "Such was the corrective influence which he exercised on all things human that, besides widely restoring faith and morals, his principles of evangelical charity and justice found their way even more deeply into the readjustment of the so-called social life."<sup>9</sup> The whole encyclical from which this quotation is taken makes interesting reading in this connection. The social evils of St. Francis' day are vividly described, evils which bear interesting analogies to present-day social problems. Then Pope Pius XI describes how the saint met these evils by the shining example of his own holy life. Here is personalistic social action of the highest order, the social effect of the individual practice of the Christian social virtues.

It is not difficult to see what personalistic social action can mean in the concrete. Even in the absence of labor organization there is much that the individual worker can do. He alone cannot secure better wages for his fellow-workers, but he can show his fraternal charity for them by visiting them in sickness, cheering them in discouragement, praying for better working

<sup>9</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical, *Rite expiatis* (Seventh centenary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi), April 30, 1926.

conditions, and setting an example of fortitude in adversity. The Belgian Jocistes have shown what an enormous good can be accomplished by such means.

Even without the aid of organization the consumer can do much to remedy certain economic ills. By study he can develop his buying skill and give his patronage to stores which offer honest goods at a fair price. Thus he not only helps himself but others as well; for it is socially desirable that honest merchants be encouraged. He can encourage social justice by refusing to patronize stores where unjust working conditions exist.

The individual citizen cannot remove by his unaided efforts all the injustices which the Negro suffers. But at least he can himself be fair to Negroes. He can expurge unkind racial epithets from his vocabulary. He can refuse to be amused by unfair racial jokes; after all, these witticisms may be as immoral as if they were obscene. When he has employment to offer, he can take Negroes on the same basis as whites and at the same pay. He can withhold his patronage from business establishments which do not welcome Negroes. It would be easy to multiply examples; but the Catholic personalist will not need suggestions. His own intelligence will suggest a thousand ways of meeting social problems by the uncompromising practice of the Christian virtues.

*Both Types Needed.* It is sometimes asked whether organized action or personalistic action should receive the preference. This question betrays a failure to understand the correct approach to the treatment of social problems. It is like asking whether the right eye or the left eye is more important. Obviously both eyes are necessary to efficient vision. The man who loses an eye can still see, but he is definitely handicapped. So with social action. Both kinds are needed. Under an unjust government organized action by non-State groups may be

wholly suppressed and the State itself may tolerate social injustice. Under such conditions Catholics are forced to confine themselves to personalistic action, but they are definitely handicapped. Really efficient social action requires both types.

However, each kind of action is at its best in certain fields. Some problems can only be effectively met when the power of the State is marshalled against them. In other instances unofficial organizations are most efficient. Experience has shown, for example, that workers do not progress very far in their fight against unjustly low wages without strong unions. On the other hand, some social evils are so closely tied up with individual behavior that a purely organized attack is ineffective. The liquor evil is a brilliant example of this. The Prohibition Amendment was passed under the assumption that so personal an evil as inebriety could be removed by law. Generally speaking, Catholics were critical of the experiment and the result justified them. It is wise for the State to regulate the liquor traffic, but the fundamental remedy is the temperance movement, which is pure personalistic action.

As the various social problems are discussed, the student should always ask himself: "What can I personally do to improve conditions? What is the rôle of organization?" If the student does this, then his interest will be more than merely academic. It will be living and vital.

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*cene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (New York, Christian Lit. Co., 1886-1900). These are non-Catholic translations and somewhat antiquated; but they are the most available source. See particularly St. Augustine's *City of God* translated in the latter work. St. Thomas is of course the most important of the scholastics. There is an excellent and inexpensive translation of his *De regimine principum*: PHELAN, Gerald, translator, *On the Governance of Rulers* (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1938). The *Summa* has been translated by the English Dominicans: *The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas Literally Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province* (New York, Benziger, 1911-25).

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## Chapter III

### THE GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

THE LIFE AND PROBLEMS of the American people are affected to a considerable extent by the character of the areas in which they live. The climate, the type of soil, the presence or absence of mineral deposits, the proximity to the sea or to navigable rivers, and other such factors go far towards determining the type of economic life which prevails in a district. This, in turn, affects local social problems. The problems of a mining town are different from those of a cattle-raising area and these in turn differ from the problems of a busy seaport. Therefore it is often illuminating to consider social problems in the light of their geographic background.

### THE REGIONAL VIEWPOINT

*What Is a Region?* Popular speech has traditionally divided the country into more or less definite areas such as New England, the Cotton Belt, the Pacific Northwest. In recent years geographers and sociologists have been examining the factual basis for such divisions and have been suggesting new ones. Thus the term *region* has acquired considerable importance in social thinking. Many definitions have been suggested. Odum and Moore list twenty-eight definitions and the list is not exhaustive.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most convenient definition for the present purpose is that given by the National Resources Committee as representing the composite judgment of a dozen social

<sup>1</sup> H. W. Odum and H. E. Moore, *American Regionalism* (New York, Holt, 1938), p. 2.

scientists whom they questioned. "A region," according to this group, "is generally considered to be an area exhibiting homogeneity in one or more of its aspects, and thus it represents an areal or spatial generalization."<sup>2</sup>

*The Multifactor Region.* Regions are characterized by homogeneity, that is, by sameness. As the definition suggests, this homogeneity may concern only one aspect or it may concern many. Thus it would be possible to divide the country into a number of regions taking into consideration a single factor such as soil, climate, water resources, minerals, metropolitan influence, or any one of a number of others. This division of the country into various sets of single-factor regions is illuminating for purposes of special study. However, for practical purposes, the multifactor region is more important, that is to say, the region which shows homogeneity in a number of different aspects. The ideal multifactor region would show sameness in all respects. It would show uniformity not only in such physical respects as relief, drainage, natural vegetation, but also in such cultural aspects as voting habits, social conditions, type of population. But, of course, in actual practice it is not possible to find regions with such complete homogeneity; so a good compromise is the best that can be attained. The multifactor region, then, is one with the greatest possible uniformity in regard to the largest possible number of factors. It represents our best regional unit for purposes of planning to improve social conditions.

#### THE REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

Various divisions of the country into multifactor regions have been suggested. Among these one of the most thoroughly

<sup>2</sup> National Resources Committee, *Regional Factors in National Planning and Development*. Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1935, p. 145.

worked out was that published by the National Resources Committee,<sup>3</sup> which recognizes twelve multifactor regions selected particularly for convenience in regional planning. This probably represents the nearest approach to an official division of the country into regions. For the present purpose, however, it will be more convenient to use Odum's simpler division into six regions of socio-economic homogeneity, since this division is made from the standpoint of the sociologist.<sup>4</sup> These six broad divisions are the *Northeast* and *Southeast*, the *Northwest* and *Southwest*, the *Middle States*, and the *Far West*.

*The Northeast.* This region consists of the District of Columbia and twelve states: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia. The Northeast has varied topography and is outstanding in many respects. Although this is the smallest of the six regions it has easily the largest population and a still larger proportion of the urban population. Since it is the part of the country nearest Europe and since it contains the largest port of entry, it has an unusually high proportion of the foreign born.

The Northeast leads the country in manufacturing, banking, and finance. It shows the highest per capita concentration of wealth. Agriculture, though not unimportant, is definitely secondary to urban economy. The wealth of the region and its concentrated population give it an advantage in such cultural institutions as schools, universities, libraries, museums, and musical organizations. It contains the national capital and the majority of foundations and agencies interested in social reform. In it are the great centers of literature, art, and drama. It shares with the Southeast the distinction of being the scene of

<sup>3</sup> *Regional Factors*, pp. 165-69.

<sup>4</sup> H. W. Odum, *American Social Problems* (New York, Holt, 1939), p. 122.

American Colonial history with all the associations which that implies.

The characteristic problems of the Northeast region are essentially those of an urbanized and industrialized area such as poor housing, unemployment, and a declining birth rate, which will be discussed later in more detail. Northern New England and northern New York form a somewhat specialized area within the region. Scattered rural settlements on submarginal land are a problem here. On the other hand, the growing use of the area for recreational purposes is a hopeful portent for the future.

*The Southeast.* Eleven states are included in the Southeast: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Perhaps the most prominent characteristics of the Southeast are the predominance of the one-crop system of agriculture (cotton or tobacco), a large proportion of the country's Negro population, and a distinctive set of social and political traditions. The white population is predominantly native born since very few recent immigrants settled in this area. Its culture is agrarian, and it is characterized by a natural abundance and diversity of vegetation. It is extremely varied geographically but has suffered from exploitation of its resources. Included in this region is the old South whose statesmen gave distinguished leadership to the nation. The modern South is culturally isolated in many ways and is handicapped by race antagonism and a bad agrarian system, both carry-overs from the plantation era.

The history of the Southeast is inseparably bound up with cotton. This was early developed as a cash crop to the detriment of small, self-sufficient farms with varied crops. Cotton involved large-scale farming with slave labor. When the cotton gin was invented, the system received new impetus. After the

slaves were liberated very many of them became tenant farmers. Unfortunately farm tenancy has increased rather rapidly; between 1880 and 1930 the proportion of tenant farmers more than doubled. In the next five years there was a further increase of 7.5 per cent. At present there are more white than Negro tenants. Single-crop farming has worn out the soil in large areas. Concentration on a commercial crop has meant that a large farm region is left without food crops, and the people are living on an insufficient and poorly balanced diet. Diversified farming is being urged as a remedy.

An important subregion of the Southeast is the Gulf Coast. Here the climate is tropical or subtropical. Winter vegetables, rice, sugar cane, and citrus fruits are raised. Recently Florida has become nationally favored as a winter playground.

*The Northwest.* Here there are nine states, namely: North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah. By and large it is a land of little rainfall. Therefore farming is limited and much of the territory is given over to cattle ranches. For this reason it is sparsely settled. Although it is the largest of the regions in area, its inhabitants make up only a small percentage of the population of the United States. Population is increasing very slowly and cities are rare. There is little manufacturing or industry. In addition to farming and grazing, opportunity for recreation must be counted as a major resource of the region which includes some of our best known national parks. Conservation of the meager water supply is an outstanding problem of the Northwest. Western Kansas and eastern Colorado are parts of the Dust Bowl, which will be described below.

*The Southwest.* Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona make up the Southwest region. The climate is prevailingly arid. Cattle ranches are numerous. The western extension of the cotton belt has made this crop important in Texas and

Oklahoma. Texas shares with California the distinction of containing the richest oil reserves. Mining has a certain importance. The region as a whole is sparsely populated; yet Texas in contrast boasts of flourishing and growing cities. Its culture shows the influence of its Spanish origin and of its large Mexican and Indian population.

A substantial part of the much discussed *Dust Bowl* is located in this region. The term is applied to an area where wind erosion has been particularly acute. It includes the Panhandle of Texas, western Oklahoma, western Kansas, eastern Colorado, and a small part of eastern New Mexico. The Dust Bowl thus cuts across both the Southwest and Northwest regions but it is treated here for convenience. Consider the plight of the farmers who settled in this area. The land appeared fertile and there was plenty of grass, but the people did not realize that this was a land of uncertain rainfall, and hence not good for farming. Many thousands of them were forced to abandon their farms during bad years.

*The Middle States.* There are eight states in this region: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. The Middle States include the richest agricultural land in America. The United States Department of Agriculture has classified 5.3 per cent of all the land in the country as "excellent" for general crops without irrigation, drainage, or fertilization. Of this excellent land more than one-quarter is in the single state of Iowa, which is followed in order by Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri. The basic farm products are corn, oats, pork, beef, and dairy products. This flourishing agriculture forms the economic basis of a number of prosperous cities, St. Louis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and above all Chicago. The region is sometimes called the "most American" in its manners and folkways because of its democratic people and institutions.

An important subregion of the Middle States is located around the Great Lakes. The upper part raises grain in great quantities. Copper and iron, especially the latter, have played an important part in the development of the upper lake subregion. The Great Lakes themselves are an unequaled group of inland waterways connecting the upper and lower parts of the subregion. On the lower lakes or linked with them by excellent avenues of transportation cluster a group of cities, Detroit, Cleveland, Gary, Youngstown, Akron, which are flourishing manufacturing centers. Chicago partakes of the character of these cities as well as of the first group. It is a region of mass production which has grown and prospered with the development of that technique.

The region as a whole is an excellent example of balance between agriculture and industry. It includes rivers and forests, farm land and prairies, and presents a challenge to the East in its industrial and metropolitan centers. The problems of labor in the mass-production industries, and the exploitation of natural resources such as lumber and metals are outstanding ones.

*The Far West.* This is sometimes called the Pacific West, and includes four states: Washington, Oregon, California, and Nevada. The Far West shows a wide range of climate, from the mild winters and moist cool summers of the North to the Mediterranean climate of the South, with its mild rainy winters and dry summers. This climatic diversity is reflected in its economic life. The Pacific Northwest has its forests and fisheries with the all-around agriculture and fruits of the Willamette Valley. Its water-power resources which are now being actively developed promise industrial growth in the future. Central and southern California are the scene of large-scale farming, in winter vegetables, grapes, citrus fruits, and other tree crops. The motion-picture industry of southern California is not only important economically but leaves a characteristic



imprint on the culture of the region. Its culture is further diversified by a relatively large Oriental population as well as by Spanish prenatal influences.

The northern part of the region contains the country's largest reserve of standing timber. It is important that these forests be carefully utilized with a program of intelligent conservation and scientific forestry to avoid the disastrous mistakes made in other regions. The problem of irrigation is a major issue in the arid South which calls for careful planning. Migratory farm labor is badly exploited. National interest has recently been focused on this problem<sup>5</sup> which imperatively calls for an early solution. The Orientals of California, like the Negroes of the Southeast, form a minority group which, whatever the reason, have suffered as victims of intense race prejudice.

#### REGIONAL PLANNING

Since a multifactor region has, by definition, certain social and economic characteristics in common throughout, it is natural that some of the problems of the region will also exhibit a certain sameness. This being the case it seems logical to attack these problems on a regional basis. This is the fundamental thought behind regional planning.

One difficulty arises from the fact that the political divisions and the economic and geographic areas do not coincide. The fact that political power is divided between a number of different states makes it difficult to get a unified region. No one of the several states within a given region can assume the authority to devise and execute a regional plan. The power of the Federal government, on the other hand, is definitely limited by the Constitution, and the tradition of states' rights makes the states jealous of interference.

<sup>5</sup> Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1939).

In spite of these difficulties several promising beginnings of regional planning have been made. Some of these are based on the use of the *interstate compact*. Subsection 3 of section 10 of article 1 of the United States Constitution forbids the states without consent of Congress to "enter into agreement or compact with another State." This has been interpreted as positively permitting such interstate compacts with consent of Congress. Thus an effective means of regional planning is provided for questions which do not involve competition between the states. By means of such compacts various interstate problems have been approached, for example, crime prevention or the regulation of certain utilities. The Port of New York Authority was set up in 1920 by the states of New York and New Jersey and has as its purpose the improvement of the harbor facilities of New York Bay and its tributaries. Other interstate compacts are directed towards the conservation of natural resources or the apportionment, for irrigation or city water supply, of the waters of an interstate stream. However useful compacts may be, experience has shown that they are not a complete solution to the problem of regional planning. Where the selfish interests of states are vitally affected, interstate compacts are often ineffective unless the Federal government is in a position to force the adoption of a satisfactory compact as an alternative to control from Washington.

Another type of regional planning is exclusively Federal. After all, although the powers of the national government are limited by the Constitution, they still remain fairly broad. Under these powers a certain amount of regional planning is possible even without previous action by state legislatures.<sup>6</sup> A rather obvious example, involving at least some attention to planning, is the division of the country into regions by various Federal agencies for administrative purposes. Occasionally the

<sup>6</sup> *Regional Factors*, Chapter VIII.

Federal agencies use a regional division of the country for the very conscious purpose of planning and program-making. This is the case with such agencies as the Federal Reserve Board, the Bureau of Public Roads, and, of course, the National Resources Committee. Finally the Tennessee Valley Authority represents a regional approach which is so definite that the project stands by itself as a unique example of the regional idea carried to its logical conclusion in regional planning.

The Tennessee Valley Authority was created by Act of Congress in 1933. It is charged with the development of the drainage area of the Tennessee River which includes parts of the States of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky. The purpose of the TVA is to develop the Tennessee and tributary rivers by a system of dams which will reduce the danger of floods, maintain a nine-foot navigation channel, and provide a cheap source of electricity. A second purpose is to secure the coöperation of owners of private land in the valley in a program of improved land use so as to promote retention of rainfall in the soil of the area. Proponents of regional planning see in the TVA a shining example of what such planning can accomplish when conceived on a broad scale in accordance with a well thought out and unified plan.

#### URBAN AND RURAL PROBLEMS

Within each of the various regions and subregions the people fall into two groups, urban and the rural. The respective ways of life of these two groups can show considerable differences. In consequence urban and rural social problems differ correspondingly.

*Urban Life.* There is, of course, no sharp line of division between city and country. One type of area shades into the other imperceptibly. Again, there are various degrees of urban-

ization within the urban classification itself. Life in New York City is quite different from life in a small city of five or ten thousand inhabitants. A complete treatment of urban problems would have to take those differences into consideration.

One must not think of a city in merely physical terms alone. A city is not merely a large aggregation of people living in a compact area. A city means something psychologically. It is a way of life. It has a culture pattern of its own, and this culture pattern affects the surrounding rural community which reads the metropolitan newspapers and does some of its shopping in the metropolitan stores. The whole hinterland of a city is to a large degree economically dependent on the city. Thus the city's sphere of influence can extend far beyond its borders. The increasing urbanization of the country affects not only city people but also country people living for miles around. The whole country therefore has been profoundly affected by the fact that whereas in 1880, 28.6 per cent of the American people lived in cities, in 1940 the proportion was 56.5 per cent.<sup>7</sup>

The social problems of the city are many. As one might expect they arise characteristically out of the concentration and congestion of the population. Industrial concentration demands a near-by labor supply, and the massing of the labor supply easily leads to housing problems and health problems.

The breakdown of the American family has gone further in the city than in the country. One concrete indication of this is the fact that in 1940 the net reproduction rate was 76 for city dwellers and 136 and 116 for the rural-farm and non-farm population respectively.<sup>8</sup> It is regrettable to note, however,

<sup>7</sup> Final figures, released by Bureau of the Census, February 27, 1942.

<sup>8</sup> Bureau of the Census release, February 21, 1941: *Future population growth in the United States by color and urban-rural residence as measured by the net reproduction rate (preliminary): 1940*. The Census Bureau defines the net reproduction rate as representing "the average number of daughters that would be born per 100 females starting life together if present birth and death rates at different age levels remained unchanged."

that the decline of the reproductive rate in the rural population is very rapid. Only the process has not gone as far as it has in the city. Many writers have emphasized the artificiality of city life. In contrast rural life is more closely in contact with nature. The city is characterized by economic extremes. Wealthy people may live in elaborate mansions within only a few blocks of squalid slums. The city harbors many pathological types—a fact reflected by higher rates for insanity, suicide, and drug addiction. Again the problems of crime and delinquency are more concentrated in the city.

*Rural Life.* Just as urbanization shows various degrees, so the characteristic features of rural life exist in various degrees. Life in a small village is different from life on a lonely farm cut off from the outside world by distance and by poor roads.

Many rural problems are economic. It is often hard for the farmer to make a living. There has been a considerable loss of soil fertility, particularly in some areas and with the end of the frontier it is no longer possible to get land for the asking. In the post-war financial crash the rural areas were badly affected. The failure of rural banks was widespread. The problems of farm tenancy and ownership are associated with the general financial condition of the country.

Other problems of rural life grow out of the isolation of the individual and the need for bringing to him the advantages of modern life which facilitate socialization. Country people are often handicapped by the lack of facilities for education, health, and recreation, which even the poor enjoy in urban areas. They are neglected from the standpoint of Church opportunities. Therefore, the problems of poverty and isolation, and a lack of the cultural and health opportunities that can be found in the cities, are frequent in rural areas.

*Similarities.* There are variations in the problems of the city and the country due to physical and geographic differences,

but there are similarities as well, since both city and country are a part of the same economic system and culture which prevail in the United States. The culture of the rural districts is essentially the same as that of the city; the radio and automobile, newspapers, magazines, and books bring them in contact with the same philosophy which is held in the city as well as the same individualistic viewpoint, and the same glorification of wealth.

Again, the country, as well as the city, is handicapped by the disadvantages of existing economic arrangements. There has been much concern about the exploitation of the city worker. Carey McWilliams<sup>9</sup> points out, however, that the large-scale factory-farm involves the same sort of exploitation of the rural worker. Today it is exemplified in the wheat-raising and dairying regions and particularly in California where corporation farming has created a sort of rural proletariat. The factory system of farming has begun to cause the replacement of the small owner and where it has appeared it means unemployment and insecurity for many. Luckily the farm-factory system is not yet very widespread, but it is well enough established to prove that city and country have many similarities.

*The Catholic Rural Life Movement.* There are a variety of Catholic organizations and agencies which have taken an interest in farmers as well as urban people, but three have been especially significant, namely The Catholic Central Verein of America, the Catholic Rural Life Conference, and the Rural Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.<sup>10</sup>

The Central Verein was the first national organization to interest itself in rural life and problems. It was started in 1855 when a number of German Catholics banded their local soci-

<sup>9</sup> *Factories in the Field.*

<sup>10</sup> Edgar Schmiedeler, *A Better Rural Life* (New York, Joseph F. Wagner, 1938), Chapters IX and X.

eties into a national organization. The Central Bureau became the national headquarters in 1908 and took over the publication of the monthly paper *Central-Blatt and Social Justice*. This organization sponsors a systematic program of Catholic Social Action with particular emphasis on matters of rural interest.

The Catholic Rural Life Conference is of more recent date. It was started in 1923, and may be characterized as an organization of leaders interested in rural life and problems. Its objective is to strengthen Catholicism in rural areas and to work for the welfare of rural people in general. It stimulates interest in rural questions by national forums for discussion of significant questions, by development of literature on the field, as well as by other projects. It sponsors two publications, a monthly, *Catholic Rural Life*, and a small quarterly, *Landward*.

The Rural Life Bureau, a subdivision of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, deserves emphasis. The Rural Life Bureau antedated the Catholic Rural Life Conference which developed from it, but located its national headquarters in Washington only in 1927. The Bureau has placed great emphasis on the religious instruction of rural children through Religious Vacation Schools. At present it is developing a significant program to stimulate local programs of action. In 1923, the plan of inaugurating rural-life bureaus in each rural diocese with diocesan directors in charge was started. The National Bureau sponsors institutes for the diocesan directors and a publication called *Rural Bureau Notes* to spread up-to-date information of the field. In addition it recommends a specific and comprehensive selection of projects for local action.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL PLANNING

As the present chapter has shown, there are real differences between the problems characteristic of the various parts of the

country and there are real differences between rural and urban problems. Common sense demands that these differences should be taken into account when the social problems of the country as a whole are being considered.

It is only too easy to focus one's attention on the problems characteristic of one's own locality and to remain indifferent to the issues which people in other localities face. City people in general have little appreciation of farm problems. On the other hand, the agricultural regions too often have antagonism towards the industrialized areas rather than intelligent understanding of their difficulties. So it is with the other divisions of the country. Mutual sympathetic appreciation of one another's problems is all too rare.

This provincialism is, after all, rather stupid. There is a very considerable social and economic interdependence among the various regions of the country, and directly between city and country. An economic depression in industrial areas means loss of buying power and the farmer cannot sell his crops. Whether farm depression causes city depression, or vice versa, is not of concern here. The result is that many city people are underfed because they cannot buy from the farmer and the latter feels the pinch of poverty because he cannot sell. Such problems are hard to solve as long as each citizen is concerned only with the problems of his own area. They are easier to meet if planning faces the country as a whole as an economic unit.

The moral evidently is that each person should familiarize himself with the peculiar social problems of regions other than his own. This calls first of all for a knowledge of the facts. The city man should make it a point to read about rural life. The farmer should be anxious to learn something about industrial problems; he should acquire a sympathy for labor unions. Knowledge, however, is not enough. Each must be willing to



make sacrifices to help solve the problems of other regions. Charity obviously requires this. But even an enlightened self-interest should make it clear that distress in some other part of the country will sooner or later react on one's own region. The intelligent thing to do is to maintain an informed and sympathetic attitude towards the treatment of social problems in all parts of the country and not merely in one's own.

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## Chapter IV

### THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES

HUMAN SOCIETY is made up of human beings and receives its special character from them. To understand the background of social problems in the United States, therefore, it is important to know something about the American people. How many people live in this country? How are they distributed with regard to age, national origins, and race? How many live in the city and how many in rural areas? Does the population of the country tend to increase or decrease and how rapidly? These questions will be considered in the present chapter.

#### POPULATION GROWTH

On April 1, 1940, at the time of the Sixteenth Decennial Census, the total population of the United States with its territories and possessions was 150,621,231. The population of continental United States was 131,669,275. The latter figure excludes the population of the Philippine Islands, Alaska, American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, the Canal Zone, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Island, and persons living abroad in the military and naval service and so on.

*Rate of Growth.* The above figures represent the largest total population ever enumerated in this country. They represent a large increase over the figures for the previous decade, an increase of almost nine million for the continental United States alone or somewhat over twelve million for the United States with its territories and possessions. To understand the

significance of the figures, however, they must be examined in relation to the general trend of population growth in this country. Looked at in this light they do not seem so impressive.

In 1607 the American Colonial period began with the settlement of some 100 persons in Virginia. The period which followed was one of extremely rapid growth. Exact figures are lacking, but it has been estimated that by 1660 the colonial population had reached about 85,000. For two centuries after this the population grew at a very steady pace, increasing between 30 and 40 per cent each decade.<sup>1</sup> After the Civil War the rate of increase for the population of the continental United States slowly but steadily fell. For the decade ending in 1920, it was 14.9 per cent. The next decade did indeed show a slight gain in the rate to 16.1 per cent. But the 1940 figures which have just been quoted represent a rather dramatic fall in the rate of increase to 7.2 per cent. In other words, the United States grew less than half as much between 1930 and 1940 as it did in the previous decade. To understand what this implies it is necessary to understand the factors which condition the growth of population.

*Factors in Population Growth.* The growth of the population of the United States depends on four factors, (1) the annexation of territory, (2) net immigration, (3) the birth rate, (4) the death rate. These will now be considered separately.

(1) Whenever inhabited territory is added to the United States, the result obviously is that the country's population is increased. The area of the continental United States alone grew from 867,980 square miles in 1790 to 2,973,776 at present.

<sup>1</sup> For the decade ending in 1790, the increase was 41.3 per cent; for the decade ending in 1700, it was 28.8; for the decade ending in 1780, it was 26.1. These were the only exceptions. For a discussion of population growth in the United States with illustrative graphs and tables, see Warren S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, *Population Trends in the United States* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933), Chapter I.

Even the annexation of relatively uninhabited territory is very important because it conditions future growth. When the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 nearly doubled the territory of the United States, it did not add much to our population. Some forty thousand Creoles and slaves lived along the lower Mississippi; the rest of the territory was in the hands of the Indians save for a few trading posts. But think of the present population of this vast area which includes Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota! It seems unlikely, however, that annexation of new territory will play a large part in the future population growth of the United States.

(2) *Net* immigration means the number of arrivals minus the number of departures. There may, therefore, be a decline in population instead of a growth when more people leave the country than arrive, as has occasionally happened. In the past, immigration has played an important part in the growth of our population. Between 1820 and 1940, the total recorded arrivals were 38,290,443. In one year alone, the fiscal year ending June 30, 1914, the arrivals amounted to 1,218,480. Not only was immigration important for its direct increase of the population but also for its effect on the birth rate. Immigrants are mostly young people. Thus immigration causes a high birth rate. Since 1924 the admission of foreigners has been severely restricted by quotas by which the total number admitted is limited to 153,774 per year. The number actually admitted now is far less than this. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, for example, 70,756 aliens were admitted and 21,461, departed. This, however, was an exceptional year and the number of arrivals was swelled by crowds of refugees. In 1935, 34,956 arrived and 38,834 left. In considering future trends in population growth it seems safe to assume that there will be

no great increase in our population due to arrivals from countries covered by the quota law. It is harder to predict the possible arrivals from non-quota countries such as Mexico.

(3) Perhaps the most striking fact in connection with population trends in this country is the persistent decline of the birth rate. Thompson and Whelpton<sup>2</sup> estimate that the white birth rate in 1800 was 55.0 per thousand population. In 1930 it had sunk to 20.1 and each intervening decade showed a decrease. The latest available figures show the same trend; in 1939 the general birth rate was 17.3. The causes of this decline have been widely discussed. Doubtless very many different factors play a part; but it seems very probably that the major factor, at least in recent years, is the practice of birth prevention.<sup>3</sup> It is presumably for this reason that birth rates tend to be lowest among such groups as urban white-collar workers, among whom children are often felt as an economic burden, and highest among such groups as farmers among whom children are economically profitable. Probably many people are now refraining from birth prevention because they do not have the necessary information. Active propagandists are spreading this information more and more widely. Presumably the effect of their activity will be to depress the already low birth rate still more.

(4) The death rate is still declining, but much less rapidly than the birth rate. Between 1915 and 1938 in the original birth-registration area exclusive of Rhode Island, the death rate per thousand population fell from 14.1 to 10.9, while the birth rate fell from 25.1 to 16.1.<sup>4</sup> The advance of medical science in the future will doubtless make still further progress in preventing

<sup>2</sup> *Population Trends*, p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> See *Population Trends*, pp. 282-88, for a good discussion of the evidence.

<sup>4</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1938* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1940), Part I, p. 6. See this reference for detailed statistics accompanied by an authoritative discussion.

deaths, both through new discoveries and through the wider application of present medical knowledge. One must not assume, however, that medical progress will bring about any very significant decline in the death rate in the coming decades. As a matter of fact there are signs which point to a rise in the death rate rather than a fall. To understand this, it is important to note that the progress of scientific medicine in preventing deaths has been largely confined to the lower age groups. The *expectation of life*, that is, the length of time that a person of specified age can, on the average, expect to live, has increased very moderately for persons of forty, and very little, if at all, for persons of sixty.<sup>5</sup> As compared with other countries the United States has an abnormally low proportion of middle-aged and old people and an abnormally high proportion of young people. This means that there is a particularly high percentage of Americans in just those age groups in which modern medicine has been most successful. But the resulting low death rate cannot continue indefinitely. By preventing deaths at lower ages the physician helps increase the proportion of persons of higher ages and it is precisely at these higher ages that death rates are higher and less subject to control by improved medical methods. In other words, if present trends continue, the next few decades may show: (*a*) some further progress in preventing deaths among the lower age groups, a fact which tends to lower the general death rate, (*b*) little or no progress in preventing deaths among the higher age groups, (*c*) an increased proportion of the population represented by the higher age groups. On account of the higher death rate of older people the gain brought about through (*a*) will be more than overbalanced by the loss brought about through (*c*) and the net result will be an increasing death rate. It is too much to expect that the present (1939)

<sup>5</sup> For a wealth of material illustrating these statements, see Warren S. Thompson, *Population Problems* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1935), pp. 220-24.

death rate of 10.6 will continue after the population has become stabilized. For a death rate of 10.6 in a stabilized population would mean that the average person would have to live to be more than ninety. If the average span of life ever reaches seventy years in the United States, this will represent a greater measure of success than most experts dare hope for; yet an average life span of seventy years represents, in a stabilized population, a death rate of about fourteen. This shows how improbable it is that the present death rate will not increase.

*The Future Population of the United States.* For both theoretical and practical reasons it would be very interesting if the future population of the United States could be accurately predicted. This, however, is difficult. The factors on which population growth depends are very uncertain as will be clear from the preceding paragraphs. The best that can be done is to make certain assumptions and then estimate what the population will be in case these assumptions are verified.

In spite of all the uncertainties the estimates of competent scholars show certain points of agreement. There is general agreement that the population of the United States is rapidly approaching its maximum. If present trends continue it will reach this maximum within the next few decades, after which it will remain stationary or decline. For example, one of the most recent and careful estimates is that made by the National Resources Committee, which foresees a maximum of not over 160 millions about 1975.<sup>6</sup> It is worth noting that this, and similar estimates, will probably have to be revised downward in the light of the 1940 census returns which were unexpectedly low. Preliminary figures indicate that the net reproduction rate for 1940 was about 96 as against approximately 111 for 1930.<sup>7</sup> This means that if 1940 rates continue 100 female infants

<sup>6</sup> National Resources Committee, *Population Problems* (Washington, D. C., National Resources Committee, 1938), pp. 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> Bureau of the Census release, February 21, 1941.



would, during their lifetime, give birth to only 96 daughters. In other words, "the population of the United States will fail to maintain its numbers by approximately 4 per cent per generation" under present conditions.

### THE COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION

*Urban-Rural Trends.* The Federal Census Bureau uses a somewhat complicated definition of the term *urban*. Urban areas include all cities and all other incorporated places with a population of 2,500 or more. Besides, a few unincorporated townships with a total population of 10,000 or more and a population density of 1,000 or more per square mile are included. Finally, by a special rule, towns in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island were included as urban areas in the 1930 and the 1940 census if they contained a village of more than 2,500 inhabitants which made up more than one-half the population of the town. All areas not coming under this definition are classed as rural.

In 1900, just 40.0 per cent of the population of the continental United States was classified as urban. In 1930 the percentage had risen to 56.2. A very marked trend towards the city was therefore characteristic of the first three decades of the present century. The 1940 census showed an almost stationary urban population, the percentage being 56.5. Undoubtedly the depression years have been responsible for stopping the trend towards the city. Economic depression in the city means unemployment. On the other hand, it is not difficult to obtain abandoned farms cheaply at such times. Many city people, too, return to live with relatives in the country. There are many advantages which the country offers in hard times. In the city food must be purchased. In the country one may raise one's own food. A possible problem arises, however, from the fact that people leaving for the country in large numbers have had

to accept a lower living standard in many instances, both on account of the depressed prices of farm products and on account of the fact that they were moving to submarginal land. Thus the trend indicates the possibility of a pauperized rural population, an American peasantry, a condition already existing in some rural areas.

*White and Negro.* The proportion of Negroes in the general population of the continental United States has shown a steady tendency to decrease. In 1800, 18.9 per cent were Negro; in 1850, 15.7 per cent; in 1900, 11.6 per cent; in 1930, 9.7 per cent; and in 1940, 9.8 per cent.<sup>8</sup> Thus there was a rather sharp decline in Negro population until 1930, after which date there was a very small rise. The actual figures gave 12,865,518 Negroes in 1940. The decline in the percentage of Negroes in the population is due to various causes. In the days of unrestricted immigration the large influx of immigrants helped to raise the proportion of whites in the country since there were very few Negroes among the newcomers. At present the amount of immigration is so small that it makes little difference either way. Another factor is undoubtedly the difference in white and Negro birth and death rates. It is hard to make exact comparisons, however, since Negro birth registrations are notoriously incomplete and the Federal Bureau of the Census has admitted that Negroes were undercounted in the general census of 1870 and possibly also in 1890 and 1920.<sup>9</sup> The result, as one may well imagine, is confusion. A pertinent fact here is that Negroes have been rapidly migrating towards the cities. In 1910, 72.7 per cent of the Negro population was rural; in

<sup>8</sup> Bureau of the Census release, February 2, 1942: *Racial Composition of the Population for the United States by States: 1940*. It is interesting to note that about 95 per cent of the "nonwhite" population of the United States is made up of Negroes. The nonwhite population includes, besides Negroes, the Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and others.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1920-32* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 1.

1930, only 56.3 per cent. This cityward migration has been accompanied by a decrease in fertility which is even more marked among Negroes than among whites. "In urban areas in 1925-29, the fertility of native white women was only 14 per cent below the level necessary to replace their population, while the corresponding rate for Negro women was 28 per cent below."<sup>10</sup>

*National Origins.* Before World War I and the severe immigration laws passed at that time, the white population of the country was becoming increasingly diversified as to national origins. Between 1910 and 1920 there was a very rapid increase in the proportion from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Rumania, Greece, Italy, Spain, Mexico, the West Indies, and Central and South America. With the passage of the quota laws the proportion of newcomers from eastern and southern Europe has been restricted very radically indeed. In the future, then, the white population bids fair to be relatively unchanged, or to consist of a slowly increasing proportion of the descendants of northern and western Europeans or of immigrants from Central and South America.

*Age Trends.*<sup>11</sup> The median age of the population of the United States is gradually increasing. It was 21.4 years in 1890 and 28.9 in 1940. This means that there are relatively fewer younger people in the country and more older ones. As long ago as 1930 the decrease in the number of children of grammar-school age was apparent. On the other hand, the proportion of older persons is growing. In 1840 about 2.5 per cent of the population was 65 years old and over; in 1930, 5.4 per cent. The decade 1930-1940 saw a rather rapid rise; in the latter year the figure reached 6.8 per cent. The increase is

<sup>10</sup> National Resources Committee, *Population Problems*, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> The statements in this paragraph about 1940 are preliminary estimates by the Federal Bureau of the Census and are based on the analysis of a 5 per cent sample of the population.

perhaps more striking when the absolute numbers of old people are considered instead of their proportion. In 1940 there were about 8,956,000 people of 65 or over in the country, but the National Resources Committee has estimated that in 1980 there will be about 22,000,000. This means that in social planning more and more attention will have to be devoted to the problems of the aged.

The shifting age distribution of the American people is important during the productive ages 20-64. Within this age range there has been a relatively slow growth in the proportion of persons 20-44 (38.3 per cent in 1930; 39.0 in 1940) and a more rapid growth in the proportion of persons 45-64 (17.4 in 1930; 19.7 in 1940). There is reason to believe that this shift will continue. The National Resources Committee estimates that from 1935 to 1975 the *number* (not the proportion) of persons 20-44 will increase 6 per cent, while the number of those 45-64 will increase 69 per cent. The problem of the older worker which has been made acute by the speed-up of the mass-production industries will be made more acute by the shift in the age composition of population.

#### THE PROBLEM OF THE "OPTIMUM POPULATION"

A concept which has played a considerable part in recent discussions of population problems is the concept of "optimum population." The optimum population is the population whose size is most desirable for the area and the conditions considered. This concept is an old one but only about twenty-five years ago it was elaborated and given a name by Edward Cannan and Knut Wicksell who considered the concept in relation to its bearing on standards of living.

*Divergent Concepts of the Optimum Population.* There is evidently room for disagreement about what size of popula-

tion is best under given circumstances; for different people may judge by different standards. A militarist anxious for the largest possible army may not agree with a certain type of social reformer anxious to reduce the number of the poor. What standards shall be accepted as a criterion for judging the optimum?

Various answers have been given to the above question. There are some who answer in frankly materialistic terms. Thus Wolfe<sup>12</sup> says: "The optimum size of population will be that which furnishes the labor supply which, fully utilized, is necessary to operate the total resources of land, materials, and instrumental capital at the point of least (labor) cost per unit of product or income." The weakness of this viewpoint, which measures the good of society exclusively in terms of productive efficiency, is too evident to be stressed. Another group of theorists reject this economic optimum and insist on a "welfare" optimum. The most obvious difficulty with this latter concept is that it is so hard to define. The welfare optimum is generally spoken of as one which takes into consideration all phases of group life and not merely the economic phase; or it is defined as that which makes for all-round development or the richest life for the individual. Obviously such language is too vague to be very helpful.

The economic maximum and the welfare maximum are concepts which, in spite of their weakness, have been defended by serious students. There are certain other concepts which are not seriously defended in current scientific literature but which, nevertheless, have a considerable influence on popular thinking. One such advocates the largest possible population as an aid to the military strength of a nation. When the population becomes too large for the country, then foreign territory

<sup>12</sup> A. B. Wolfe, "The Theory of Optimum Population," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 188:243-49, November, 1936.

must be conquered and colonized by the surplus inhabitants. This viewpoint has undoubtedly played its part in the policies of the German and Italian governments. Another attitude favors the restriction of the population lest the people outgrow their country. This is essentially the viewpoint of Malthus who wrote at the end of the eighteenth century. The theory itself has been thoroughly discredited now and, as regards the United States specifically, the probabilities all point to a stationary or declining population. Yet the Malthusian theory has long been a favorite argument of those who advocate contraception and the theory even played its part in the agitation for the restriction of immigration.

*The Catholic Attitude.* Since birth prevention is contrary to the moral law Catholics do not regard the size of the population as subject to artificial control in the same way as do non-Catholic writers. Catholics emphasize the quality of the population more than the quantity. Parents should worry about training their children in the fear of God rather than about the optimum population. However, Catholics do not refuse to consider the facts and discuss the possibility of overpopulation or underpopulation.

Certainly overpopulation can be a problem. It is a problem at the present time in India and China. To call overpopulation a problem, however, is not to call it an insoluble problem. A country with too many inhabitants to be fed by food raised at home may be able to obtain food from abroad in exchange for manufactured goods or other articles of commerce. Again, there is the device of emigration, to be arranged by mutual agreement among the nations. Under such conditions overpopulation ceases to be a problem. No one would say, for example, that England is overpopulated now. Overpopulation, then, cannot be measured in terms of inhabitants per square mile of area, nor even in terms of inhabitants per square mile

of arable land. It is a relative concept. A country may be very densely populated but this does not necessarily imply that it is overpopulated.

Underpopulation also can be a problem. A dwindling population implies a loss of national vitality, even the threat of non-existence. Unfortunately race suicide is more than a clever phrase; it is a real danger. Many peoples have declined in numbers until they finally disappeared from history either peacefully absorbed or forcibly driven under by more virile nations and races. There is some doubt about the economic effects of population decline. American business men have always viewed the growth of the country as a good sign. Possibly this is too naïve a view; yet a country with a declining population, abandoned farms, deserted mines, and closed factories, is not likely to be economically healthy. Finally there is the supernatural viewpoint. The more people there are born, the more there are to love God and attain heaven. Human life is a good thing in itself. It is well that it should be multiplied. Certainly this is not the least important of the reasons why a shrinking population is to be deplored.

The Catholic, in contradiction to the advocates of contraception, sees little reason to try to control the size of the population. If, in a particular country, the population should grow to such an extent that overpopulation should become a problem, the Catholic would try to solve the difficulty by such methods as a better use of natural resources, emigration, or a better distribution of income. These measures would be pretty certain to take care of the situation. In the improbable contingency that they should fail, the Church might counsel the unmarried to postpone marriage, and the married to have fewer children by voluntary continence. It is even conceivable that she should raise the minimum age at which she allows her children to marry. It is clearly false to say that the Church, by forbidding

contraception, has no remedy for the possible danger of overpopulation.<sup>13</sup>

Catholics would fight underpopulation by insisting on a high ideal of married life and the observance of the moral law. When contraception is not practiced, when an efficient economic system and a just distribution of income assure each working man a family living wage and a share in the benefits of scientific progress, when the moral fiber of the people is virile and generous, then there will be no danger of underpopulation.

For the Catholic, the optimum population cannot be accurately defined in terms of numbers. The optimum or best population is that which naturally arises when family life is strong and morality is sound. Under these circumstances the quality of the population is good and, this being the case, there need be little reason to worry about its quantity.

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Vital statistics (births and deaths) are published every year in U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics of the United States* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, published annually). A great deal of statistical information collected by various

<sup>13</sup> The relation of birth prevention to family problems will be considered in Chapter VII.



government agencies is assembled in U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, published annually). The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company publishes a *Statistical Bulletin* which presents short analyses of diseases, accidents, deaths, and similar data based on the company's enormous group of industrial insurance policyholders. Although naturally less accurate than the census reports, this publication is often valuable for the very recent information it contains.

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There is a tendency for important studies on population to appear around the middle of the decade when they can take advantage of the complete reports of the latest decennial census. This will account for the dearth of recent studies on the subject.

## Chapter V

### IMMIGRATION AND RACE RELATIONS

SOCIOLOGISTS often talk of *minority groups*, a concept which is important in the study of social problems. A minority group, in the sociological sense, is a number of persons regarded as a unit on account of race, nationality, or religion, who are more or less segregated from the rest of the community. The group is comparatively small and politically ineffective. There is usually misunderstanding and often conflict between such a group and the balance of the community. Because of its segregation the minority often fails to make its full potential contribution to community life. On the other hand, this same fact of segregation often leads to a failure of the majority group to respect minority rights.

The principal minority groups in the United States today from a sociological standpoint are the national and racial minorities. The former includes immigrants or descendants of immigrants who have not become fully Americanized; the latter includes the Negro, the Jew, the Indian, and the Oriental. It is important to bear in mind at the outset that the basis for these groupings is psychological rather than literal. It makes little difference how long an individual has lived in this country or even whether he was born in this country; if he is still generally regarded as a "foreigner" that fact is enough to classify him in a minority group. Similarly, it is not important from the sociologist's standpoint, whether or not the Jews constitute a distinct race in the technical anthropological sense; they con-

stitute a minority group simply because they are popularly regarded as racially distinct.

### IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES

The history of immigration into the United States falls roughly into two periods, before and after the year 1882, the date of the passage of the first comprehensive national immigration act. The immigrations during these two periods are often called the *old immigration* and the *new immigration* respectively.

*The Old Immigration.* Generally speaking, the old immigration came from northern and western Europe. For the most part the early immigrants were welcomed. Plenty of undeveloped land was still available; therefore, these newcomers did not crowd anybody. Besides they furnished a source of cheap labor which the young and growing country badly needed. Towards the end of the period, however, strong opposition began to develop. A nativist movement came into being, exemplified by such groups as the Native American Party and the Know-Nothing Party. State laws were passed against the immigrants.

*The New Immigration.* The growing opposition to unrestricted immigration reached its climax in the period beginning in 1882. The increased number of immigrants coming to our shores annually and the changed composition of the immigration brought this question to the forefront. The increase in popular sentiment against the immigrants was reflected in a series of restrictive laws designed to keep out a considerable number who desired admission. State legislation having been invalidated by the Supreme Court, the Federal government took over the responsibility of regulating immigration. In 1882 the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. Later in the same year a still more fundamental law was enacted barring lunatics, idiots,

convicts (except political offenders), and persons likely to become public charges. The Immigration Act of 1917, passed over President Wilson's veto, excluded illiterates over sixteen years of age and codified preceding laws. It barred practically all Asiatics not already excluded, materially broadened the classes with special defects to be denied admission, and provided for the deportation of aliens committing crimes in this country. A new principle of numerical restriction was introduced by the Quota Act of 1921, superseded by the broader Immigration Act of 1924. The Act of 1917 remained in force and was not nullified by the Act of 1924. These two laws remain our basic immigration legislation. Under this system all aliens are divided into immigrants and non-immigrants. The latter are nearly all temporary visitors and no restriction is placed on their entry. Immigrants are subdivided into quota immigrants and non-quota immigrants. The latter category includes, for example, ministers, professors, students, and natives of countries in this hemisphere not subject to quota. Quota immigrants are restricted to about one hundred and fifty thousand per year by a rather complicated calculation which apportions the number of admissions allowed each country according to their relative contribution to the population of the United States as shown by the census of 1920.<sup>1</sup> Immigration was still further restricted in 1930 by a presidential order instructing officials to enforce more rigidly the clause which excluded persons likely to become public charges.

One reason for the intense opposition to the new immigration was the changed character of the immigrants themselves. In contrast to the earlier immigrants, the newcomers included a high proportion of people from southern and eastern Europe,

<sup>1</sup> For an explanation of this law see M. R. Davie, *World Immigration with Special Reference to the United States* (New York, Macmillan, 1936), pp. 375-81.

as well as Orientals. The fallacious theory of "Nordic superiority" was in vogue and the newcomers were considered undesirable. Another reason was the gradual disappearance of vacant land. Before this the surplus population was readily absorbed by the Great West. Now, however, unoccupied farm land was becoming more and more scarce, the surplus population drifted to the great cities, and competition among workers made it difficult to uphold high wage standards. Finally, an ignorant nativism, often disguised as "patriotism," opposed the foreigner as "un-American."

*The Effect of Immigration on the Country.* It is important to realize that immigration did not create any new social problems at all, but did intensify some of our problems such as poverty and unemployment. The coming of immigration tended towards the lowering of the wage level, since these people from the old country were not familiar with the American labor movement and were handicapped by language difficulties. Thus the labor movement was weakened until such time as the immigrant became adjusted to American ways of organization. The unemployment problem was intensified inasmuch as the large majority of incomers were looking for work. As the immigrant man was forced to work for a very low wage, woman and child labor were increased.

Before 1917 when the literacy test was made a part of the restrictive legislation, more than one-fourth of all immigrants fourteen years of age or over were illiterate. Thus the amount of illiteracy in the country was increased by immigration. Also the rates of pauperism and dependency were higher among the immigrant groups than among the natives.

On the other hand, one must consider the contributions made by the immigrant to the country. The immigrant group did a great deal of important, hard, and difficult work for the country, and in addition made an artistic and cultural contri-

bution of great value. Another consideration to note is that the policy of immigration restriction neglected the important fact that the immigrant is a consumer as well as a producer, "that he brings a mouth as well as a pair of hands." And last but not least immigration is chiefly responsible for the rapid growth of the Church in the United States.

*Problems of the Individual Immigrant.* In the early period of immigration those who came to this country suffered extreme hardships. They had a long and difficult ocean voyage under deplorable conditions, such as extreme overcrowding, shortage of food and fresh water, and sickness of all kinds. Many of the early immigrants died from these hardships and others arrived in extremely poor physical condition. Then again, thousands of others were exploited and fleeced of their small savings.

The immigrants from southern and eastern Europe frequently were unable to bring their families with them, as they were not able to raise sufficient money to pay the cost of the ocean voyage. Social workers describe the problems of these separated families. In many cases a long period of years went by before they could be reunited and in some cases family ties were completely disrupted.

The very low wage frequently paid to the immigrant father made it impossible for him to support his family. Hence the problem of the working mother became a frequent one, with bad consequences on the home. As the mother was away from the home to supplement the family income, she was not able to give her children the proper care and attention. In many instances this led to juvenile delinquency among the second generation. The problems of the immigrant parents were intensified by conflict between the ideas of the old world and those of the new. In many cases this led to the breakdown of parental authority and to the separation of parents and children.

The problem of adjusting to American ways of living was a difficult one for most immigrants. But it was particularly difficult for the second generation who have been described as marginal men, since they were not a part of the old world tradition, nor did they belong completely to the new. Many who were unable to integrate the two cultural worlds became confused and demoralized.

*Why Study Immigration Today?* Since the number of immigrants arriving from Europe and Asia has now become so small the student may be prompted to ask why immigration should be discussed at all under present conditions. There are two answers to this question. First of all, the problem is by no means negligible at present. There are still millions of unassimilated Europeans and Asiatics in this country who migrated hither before the passage of stringent laws.<sup>2</sup> Then there is a steady influx of Mexicans and French Canadians who are not excluded by present legislation. Even immigration from our own outlying possessions, such as Puerto Rico, can constitute an immigration problem.

Again, a study of the history of immigration is instructive for the light it throws on the American attitude towards minority groups. Even though immigration should cease utterly, Americans would still have to deal with other minority groups as Negroes and Jews. Since the ability to get along with others is a fundamental requirement for a democracy, the solution of these problems is very important.

Political unrest in Europe and World War II have created a refugee problem which is closely allied with the problem of immigration, since the refugee is treated legally like any other immigrant with the one exception of the literacy test. Even

<sup>2</sup> The foreign-born white population of the United States on April 1, 1940 was 11,419,138 and of this number 7,250,252, or 63.5 per cent, were naturalized citizens of the United States. Bureau of the Census release, December 13, 1941.

the temporary sojourn of these refugees creates problems of adjustment similar to those of the ordinary immigrant.<sup>3</sup>

The problems of minority groups are largely created by ethnocentrism, that is, by an attitude of mind which regards one's own group (*ethnos* is Greek for tribe, group, race) as the center of the world's culture, while other groups are despised as inferior. One may laugh at this attitude in others; but one is likely to overlook it in oneself. It is amusing to learn that some primitive tribe in the South Sea Islands regards itself as the acme of superior culture and looks down on the rest of the world, the United States included, as inferior and scarcely human. Yet Americans are likely to feel the same way about themselves. The American tourist is a standing joke in Europe, with his ignorant lack of appreciation for European culture and his unshakable conviction that everything American is *ipso facto* the best in the world. American ethnocentrism is unfortunately only too well illustrated by an attitude of superiority towards the immigrant.

#### RACE RELATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Certain minority groups are distinguished from the mass of the population not by their national origins, but by their race. In this category belong the Indian, the Oriental, the Jew, and the Negro. Strictly speaking, the term *race* should be applied only to those groups which show clearly defined and hereditary physical characteristics which appear in all their members. In discussing race relations, however, the term is used in a broader sense as explained at the beginning of this chapter. As far as social problems are concerned, it is not important whether or not Jews, for example, constitute a distinct race.

<sup>3</sup> F. J. Brown (ed.), *Refugees* (Philadelphia, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939). *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, No. 203.



For the creation of a problem it is sufficient that they should be popularly regarded as such.

*American Race Attitudes.* It is unfortunate that ethnocentrism is a very common American attitude. Consider, for example, the treatment of the Chinese and Japanese on the West Coast. These newcomers naturally stood out as a distinct minority group by their physique, their language, their unfamiliar customs. This aroused an ignorant and illogical opposition. The opposition increased when these immigrants proved themselves frugal and industrious workers, whose energy and thrift were often a rebuke to the native American. Finally, since they had no vote, they were politically impotent and safe victims for persecution. As a result they suffered all sorts of judicial and economic injustice as well as downright physical violence. With the passage of the exclusion acts the persecution abated somewhat because the percentage of Orientals in the general population was reduced and they were no longer felt as a serious threat to the domination of the native group.

The Jew is another who has felt the harsh effects of American ethnocentric prejudice. It is true that in the United States the Jew does not meet the same maniacal hatred and official injustices as he does in Nazi Germany. Yet he is handicapped even here in many ways. It would be as difficult for a Jew as for a Catholic to be elected president of the United States. The Jew is excluded from some occupations more or less completely—at least in certain parts of the country. He is barred from certain amusement resorts. He meets various sorts of social discrimination. While these discriminations may not weigh on the Jew as heavily as corresponding discriminations weigh on the Negro, they are irksome enough. Worse still, a brand of fanatical anti-Semitism has made its appearance here which does not seem very different in nature from the anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany.

*Prejudice against the Negro.* Although the Negro is a native American, he has suffered more from race prejudice than the members of other minority groups. The immigrant can frequently escape prejudice as soon as he learns the language and American ways, but the Negro has been barred by the color line from taking advantage of the opportunity which is his right as an American citizen. The situation is particularly grave because of the fact that this population group is the largest racial minority group, making up about one-tenth of the population.

The Negro suffers a good deal from stereotypes, that is, from preconceived notions in the minds of his fellow citizens. He is generally considered as an unskilled laborer, as a servant, as a comic type, as a brute or depraved criminal. Again he may be pictured as an exotic African or, if he is a mulatto, as a tragic figure. On all sides it is generally taken for granted that he is mentally and socially inferior. The American white too frequently fails to take into account individual differences among the Negro group. Some members are brilliant and talented, others are dull; some are highly skilled workers, many can do only simple routine tasks. There are differences in economic status, educational background, religious training, health, and social viewpoint, just as there are among other racial groups. Thus the stereotype gives a distorted view and prevents understanding of the everyday life of the Negro.

Race prejudice has led to many problems which are specific to the Negro group in all fields of activity. Negro fathers are very frequently so underpaid that they cannot support their families. This means that the mothers also must seek gainful employment. Thus home life is broken and the children are often neglected. In general the southern states maintain segregated schools and, under these conditions, the amount spent per capita on the Negro child is only a fraction of that spent

on the white. Many law-enforcement agencies, police and courts, reflect the prevalent prejudice against Negroes. As a result, colored offenders are more harshly treated than white. Health facilities are decidedly inferior, while poor housing and poor food add to the Negro's misery. Health conditions are reflected by the fact that the white man lives on the average about eleven years longer than the Negro man and the white woman about thirteen years longer than the Negro woman.<sup>4</sup>

"In many states Negroes are, in practice, disfranchised and hence deprived of the power to better their condition. On all sides they are snubbed and insulted. A Negro social worker attending a convention found that she was required to use the freight elevator. Some people refuse to give the professional man his proper title. Even in some churches the Negroes are shunted off to the side, or required to sit in the rear, as if to protect the self-complacent Nordic from 'contamination.' It is no wonder then that so many of the race are today facing despair. It is no wonder that young and spirited Negroes, made desperate by unfair discrimination, are embracing the tenets of Communism as a last resource."<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the specific problems of the Negro he has, of course, many problems in common with whites. Dollard<sup>6</sup> and Powdermaker<sup>7</sup> studied a town in the Mississippi Delta and found that the Negro was subject to many galling and unjust restrictions. Many of these were peculiar to the Negro; but there were some which he shared with the poor white. The poor man is handicapped in American life, be he white or colored.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 78.

<sup>5</sup> M. E. Walsh, "The Double Standard," *Pax, A Catholic Monthly*, 16:108, January, 1938.

<sup>6</sup> J. Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1937).

<sup>7</sup> H. Powdermaker, *After Freedom: A Cultural Study in the Deep South* (New York, Viking, 1939).

Despite existing handicaps, many Negroes have made notable contributions to American culture. Certainly the colored race has every right to be proud of such outstanding members as Booker T. Washington, educator, Frederick Douglass, publicist, George Carver, scientist and inventor, Marian Anderson, concert artist, Richmond Barthé, sculptor, Paul Laurence Dunbar, poet, and others too numerous to mention.

*Historical Background of Present Negro-White Relations.* The fact that the Negro population group was originally brought to this country as slaves has affected their later history. The immigrants came voluntarily to our shores, whereas the Negro was brought unwillingly and made the victim of the iniquitous institution of slavery. At one early period in American history slavery was on the decline and southern leaders, as well as northern, were working to abolish its evils. However, in 1793 the invention of the cotton gin led to the development of cotton plantations on a large scale. Slavery then became so highly profitable that social leaders could do little.

The method of freeing the slaves in this country led to an aftermath of bitterness and an intensification of race hatred. As usual the destructiveness and brutalities of warfare did not yield a constructive solution to the social problem. The suffering caused by civil war led to projection of hatred on the Negro who was the innocent victim of this fratricidal strife. The contrast between this aftermath and the situation which prevails in Brazil, for example, is quite striking. The slaves in Brazil were freed by peaceful means and very quickly took their rightful place in the population, without most of the discriminations and handicaps inflicted on the American Negro.

*The Destructiveness of Race Prejudice.* It is easy enough to see how the Negro suffers as a result of race prejudice. What may be less evident is the fact that the white man suffers also. First of all, there is the fact of sin. The white man sins again

and again against charity and justice in his dealings with the colored. Then there are psychological effects. Instead of facing his own faults frankly and overcoming them, the white man often shifts the blame to the Negro as a convenient scape-goat. The proverbial demoralization of the white man in the tropics is probably due less to climate than to the enervating effect of his exploitation of the native group. Something similar happens in Negro-white relations here. By neglecting the health of the Negro, whites have created foci of contagious diseases which spread infection throughout the whole population. A high colored death rate from tuberculosis, for example, implies a health menace for the white persons who employ Negroes in their homes.

Dr. Weatherford, an outstanding southern leader in the field of race relations, emphasizes the fact that corruption of politics is closely tied up with poor race relations.

Free discussion of public policies, and free action on the basis of conviction, are the only hope of progress. But the South has no freedom. We are slaves to a caste system. For two hundred years the Negro has sat in the shadows of every civic and political assemblage. He has dominated the thinking and action of every section of our land. We dare not think independently, because in so doing we would have division, and that would mean Negro domination. One can hardly conceive a more abject slavery than this—slavery to our ever present fear. The hope of the South politically, economically, socially, and, one would almost say, religiously, is that we shall throw off this fear. Let us set up high standards of civic and political participation. Let us make them high enough and rigid enough to eliminate all the unfit—white and black. Then let us administer these tests with rigid justice to white and black alike.<sup>8</sup>

The logical outcome of the evil consequences of race prejudice can be seen in the crime of lynching. Where the individ-

<sup>8</sup> W. D. Weatherford and C. S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (Boston, D. C. Heath, 1934), pp. 421-22.

ual member of the group is considered to be inferior and his personal dignity disregarded, the road is open to almost any brutality and criminal action.

### THE MORALITY OF MINORITY-GROUP RELATIONS

If the average American's attitude of superiority towards minority groups were confined to theory, the effects would not necessarily be serious. The trouble is that these attitudes are not confined to theory. It is psychologically impossible so to confine them. They inevitably show up in practice. Sins of thought lead to sins of commission and omission. Injustice inevitably appears as soon as one forgets the basic American doctrine that all citizens are equal in their enjoyment of certain common rights, as soon as one forgets the basic Christian dogma of the Mystical Body of Christ.

*The Double Code.* Monsignor John M. Cooper has discussed what he calls "the double code." Quite commonly primitive peoples have one code of morality to govern their relations with members of their own group and another to regulate their dealings with persons outside the tribe. What would be regarded as an outrageous injustice towards a fellow tribesman is condoned or praised when the offended party is an outsider. Civilized people may smile at this naïve conception of morality; yet it is only too well illustrated in the usual American attitude towards minority groups.

This attitude is so frequent that it is accepted uncritically; yet a moment's thought will show that it is utterly indefensible. There are certain basic duties which each person owes to everyone, not because he is a native American or white, not because he is congenial or uncongenial, but because he is a human being. Abandon this doctrine and the most elementary principles of morality go by the board. "You have heard that it was said,

'Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you" (Mt. 5:43-44). If Christians are bound to love even their enemies, how much more must they love members of minority groups who can scarcely be classed as "enemies." This principle, so fundamental to Christianity, also underlies democracy. After all, in even the worst tyranny there is always a certain privileged class whose rights are respected. The very essence of a democracy is that all should enjoy these basic rights.

*Segregation.* There are some who fully agree that the rights of minority groups must be respected, but who yet favor segregation. They believe that the Negro, for example, should be excluded by law or custom from restaurants, theaters, hotels, schools, parks, beaches, and the like frequented by whites, and that parallel facilities should be provided for Negro use. This is a fairly common American attitude.

However innocent race segregation may sound in theory, experience has shown that in practice it always involves injustice. To exclude the Negro from certain public places puts him in a definitely inferior position. He is excluded on the implicit assumption that he is not the equal of the white man. Segregation puts the seal of public approval on this mistaken attitude. The Negro is thereby officially declared an inferior human being. Of course, this is not very logical; but it is thus that the human mind works. Once the Negro has been relegated to an inferior position, all sorts of injustices follow. He is paid lower wages. His schools are not given adequate financial support. He fails to receive equal justice before the law. He is not given proper medical service. If segregation without injustice were possible, it would not be particularly objectionable; but, human nature being what it is, segregation and injustice are, in practice, inseparable.

THE TREATMENT OF MINORITY-GROUP  
PROBLEMS

*Personalist Methods.* There is only one ultimately satisfactory solution for the problems involved in our relationships with minority groups. That is the frank recognition of the fact that the members of these groups are human beings, essentially like everyone else and that they have an equal right to charity and justice. In order to realize this fundamental fact, it is often useful to seek a closer acquaintance with these groups, both through study and through personal contact with individuals. Contact is a great solvent for prejudice. The man who has met Negro professional men will never be able to believe that Negroes are necessarily intellectually inferior. One who has learned to love Chinese art will never think of the Chinese as uncultured.

Infinitely more important, however, is meditation on the great Christian principle of charity. The royal law of love is the great law of the New Testament. Jesus Christ called it His commandment. It was His in a unique way, because it so completely summed up His spirit. It is a commandment that is the sole test of sanctity. "He that loveth his neighbor has fulfilled the law" (Rom. 13:8). It is obviously at least as immoral to hate whole groups as to hate an individual. It is certainly no less immoral to hate all Negroes or all Jews than to hate this Negro or that Jew. There is no possibility of conciliating race prejudice and the New Testament. They are as opposite as day and night. The personalist will not be satisfied merely to believe this. He will act in accordance with his beliefs. He will not countenance prejudice nor use offensive epithets against minority groups such as *kike*, *nigger*, *wop*. He will not allow unjust statements to be made in his presence without challenging them. He will make his disagreement with



current standards as public as possible. He will be outspoken, even if frankness makes him unpopular. This is the method of the Christian personalists.

*Organized Methods.* It is necessary to organize to bring about the repeal of unjust legislation. Certainly it is a disgrace that Americans boast of democracy and then make a mockery of democracy by their actions. Organization for education is especially important. The ignorance of the average American about minority groups and their problems is simply appalling. The remedy for this is a long and patient campaign of education. Finally, something can be done by the passage of laws forbidding unjust discrimination.

In considering minority problems, it is uniformly true that the greater part of the blame attaches to the majority group. Yet the minority groups themselves are not always free from fault. Certain groups of the foreign-born, by their own failure to try to understand American customs, make it difficult, in turn, for native-born Americans to understand them. The Negro sometimes is inclined to regard race relations as hopeless and to make no effort to explain his needs to the white man. Finally, it must not be forgotten that Catholics are themselves a minority group. If anti-Catholic prejudice exists, is it not partly due to a lack of aggressive efforts to explain Catholic doctrine to outsiders?

The problems of intergroup relations are serious enough, but it is encouraging to see that they are gradually becoming less intense. With the restriction of European and Asiatic immigration, prejudice against the foreigner has been gradually allayed. Progress is being made, too, in Negro-white relations. Only in the case of the Jew does the situation appear to be progressing unfavorably. Yet even here the American reaction against the excesses of German racism is an encouraging sign for the future.

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## Chapter VI

### PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

#### PHYSICAL HEALTH

THERE ARE certain conditions within the individual himself which may lead to social problems. One of the most important of these is physical health. Illness incapacitates the individual, prevents him from earning a living, and handicaps him in many ways. Therefore it is important to ask, What is the health status of the American people?

*Health Conditions.* Recent decades have witnessed startling advances in the field of health. It has been estimated that at the close of the Revolutionary War the expectation of life at birth was about 30 to 35 years. In 1930 it was 59 years and 63 years respectively for white males and females, the corresponding figures for Negroes being 48 and 50 years, respectively.<sup>1</sup> Later official figures are not available but the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company reports an increase for its industrial policyholders in the expectation of life at birth from 57.36 to 62.50 between 1930 and 1939.<sup>2</sup>

This progress has been due partly to advances within the science of medicine itself. Partly it has been due to better public-health services, including the improvement of drainage systems, inspection of food, filtration and treatment of water supplies, better communicable-disease control, more adequate

<sup>1</sup> H. F. Dorn, "The Increase in Average Length of Life," *Public Health Reports*, 52:1753-77, December, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, "Longevity of Industrial Policyholders in 1939," *Statistical Bulletin* 21 (No. 8): 4-6, August, 1940.

health education, more hospitals with better out-patient departments, and similar advances. Death rates from such diseases as tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhoid, and syphilis, have been notably decreased.

Despite these encouraging advances, the health problem of the American people remains a very serious one. At a given time about 2 per cent of the population is ill. Sickness causes the loss of six to nine days per year for the average working person, which totals up to an annual loss of some two hundred and fifty million work days for the whole United States. Sickness is more prevalent among the poor, the very class least able to bear this extra burden.

Sickness is exceedingly expensive. The Committee on the Costs of Medical care has placed the national annual health bill at \$3,656,000,000, or \$30.08 per capita. Falk, Rorem, and Ring analyze these expenditures as follows:

Of the total expenditures, approximately 2.9 billions of dollars consist of patients' fees and other direct expenditures by individuals and families, 510 millions of dollars are financed by governments through tax funds, 182 millions represent voluntary contributions and donations, and 79 millions are medical expenditures by industry. Individual patients and their families pay 79 per cent, governments 14 per cent, philanthropic agencies 5 per cent, and industry 2 per cent of the total.<sup>3</sup>

However, the total costs of sickness are considerably larger than the costs of medical care. The wage loss due to sickness and premature death must also be considered. Time lost through illness by the working population represents a very great economic waste. In the case of children, sickness interferes with education and prolongs the time needed to complete the curriculum. These losses for both wage earners and school children may be conservatively estimated at between two hundred and

<sup>3</sup> I. S. Falk, C. F. Rorem, and M. D. Ring, *The Costs of Medical Care* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1933), p. 8.

fifty and five hundred million dollars annually in the United States.

In part, of course, this enormous loss is inevitable. It belongs to the sad heritage of the human race. No amount of effort will ever free humanity entirely from the burden of disease and death. Partly the problem is a medical problem. Physicians may be expected to continue their present efforts to discover new and more successful treatments for disease. This purely medical problem need not be discussed here. But there is another aspect of the health situation which must interest sociologists at least as much as it interests physicians. That is the problem of bringing the benefits of the latest medical discoveries to the people who need them, for at present these benefits are unavailable to a large section of the population. In plain language, the poor cannot afford health! Some of the facts which justify this statement will now be presented.

#### MEDICAL CARE AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM

*Income and Medical Care.* Various studies have made it clear that the poor have more illness than the rich and yet they receive less adequate medical care. For example, the National Health Survey showed that persons in families on relief had 61 per cent more serious illnesses (illnesses disabling for a week or longer) than did persons in the group whose annual family income was \$5,000 or over.<sup>4</sup> The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care<sup>5</sup> compared the rich (those with annual family incomes of \$10,000 or more) with the poor (those with annual family incomes below \$1,200) and found that the latter suffered in every comparison. For example, the average person in

<sup>4</sup> R. H. Britten, "The National Health Survey: Receipt of Medical Services in Different Urban Population Groups," Reprint No. 2213 from the *Public Health Reports*, 1941.

<sup>5</sup> Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, *Medical Care for the American People* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1932).

the higher of these two groups saw a doctor 4.7 times a year. In the other group the average was only 1.9 times. Hospitalization was much more frequent with the rich. Dental care was more than five times as frequent, health examinations almost three times as frequent, eye care more than six times as frequent, in the highest than in the lowest economic class.

A fact which bears particularly heavily on the poor is the very unequal distribution of costs. During some years a family may have little or no illness and consequently little or no worry about doctors' bills. Yet in another year this same family may have considerable illness. This unevenness of health expenditures is not very hard on the rich. They have resources and from these can take care of extraordinary expenses which unexpectedly arise. Not so with the poor. The poor have very meager savings or none at all. Therefore, they find it very hard to bear the financial strain of an unforeseen and large doctor's bill. For example, the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care found that in the lowest income group studied, those with annual incomes under \$1,200, 1 per cent had been charged with bills of \$500 or more for medical service during the year and 2½ per cent had been charged from \$250 to \$500.<sup>6</sup>

*Health for Sale.* What do these facts mean? Broadly speaking they mean that health is for sale. The benefits of medical care are not for all the people. They are not for the poor. They are for those who can afford to pay. Apparently the privilege of remaining alive is a luxury reserved for those who can afford it.

It is not true, of course, that the poor receive *no* medical care. Free clinics, public-health nurses, charitably disposed physicians, and free hospital beds, all play their part. But it is true that the poor do not receive a type of medical service comparable to that received by the rich. They do not feel free

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

to consult a physician at the first appearance of the symptoms of a disease. They lack the services of expensive specialists. They cannot afford such refinements as abundant X-ray and laboratory service. They do not receive hospital treatment unless it is desperately necessary. All this adds up to the fact that the full benefits of up-to-date medicine are for the rich—not for the poor.

#### MEETING THE PROBLEM

It is clearly illogical to hope that the present system of medical care will, without modification, be adequate to solve the problem. Almost certainly the modification will be in the direction of increased community participation in the attack on the social problems involved in medical care. This is often called *socialized medicine*, and since the term is often used by conservative writers as a sort of bogey it is well to understand what socialized medicine is and above all what it is not.

To begin with, there is no reason why socialized medicine should necessarily upset the present person-to-person relationship between the physician and his patient. The patient should have freedom of choice in selecting his physician, and the latter should have freedom in choosing his method of treatment—such freedom to be restricted only by professional organizations themselves which set up standards of medical practice. However, when it is a question not of technical medical issues, but of the socio-economic problems involved in health, the community can very reasonably play its part. In fact the community is doing so at present by chartering medical schools, licensing physician to practice, building and financing hospitals, enforcing sanitary regulations, employees' compensation acts, and safety regulations, and in a dozen other ways. As long as the physician is left free within his own proper sphere there is no reason why the community should not interest itself



in health problems. To be specific there are two very important ways in which the community (the State or organized private groups) can help, namely, by attacking the problem of the distribution of costs and by increased public-health work.

*Distribution of Costs.* A good arrangement would probably be to retain essentially the present scheme of physician-patient relationship, but to arrange for a more even distribution of the cost. Thus the patient's present freedom to choose his own physician, dentist, nurse, or hospital would be retained; but the constant worry about the doctor's bill would be eliminated. It is this worry, of course, which now keeps the poor from receiving adequate medical care.

A more even distribution of the costs of medical care involves two sorts of distribution. The first is distribution of expense over a period of time. That is to say, a family may be able to bear the full cost of the medical care of its members, but it may feel the need of some sort of budgeting, since the cost varies enormously from year to year. This sort of distribution of cost may be taken care of by some form of health insurance. If the costs of a fully adequate program of medical care were evenly distributed, they would amount to about \$30 a year or a little more per capita.<sup>7</sup> A good many families could afford to pay this sum in the form of insurance. Many others, however, could not. Therefore, a second form of distribution would be necessary, namely, distribution among economic groups. The rich would thus pay part of the doctor's bill of the poor. This can be done partly by voluntary contributions. Such is the case at present when the rich build hospitals or pay for the operation of clinics. For the most part, however, the distribution of costs among economic classes would take the form of taxation. That is to say, public funds, collected by taxation, would be devoted to the medical care of the poor. Therefore

<sup>7</sup> *Medical Care for the American People*, p. 31.

insurance and taxation are to be considered the two most practical means of equitably distributing the costs of medical care.

Health insurance can take many forms. It may be organized by commercial insurance companies for private profit. It may be organized by consumer groups. It may be organized under professional sponsorship, as, for example, when a group of physicians guarantee complete medical care to participants in return for a flat annual rate. Finally, it may take the form of compulsory health insurance organized by the State.

Medical costs may be distributed by taxation in many ways. Of course even now the cost of most public-health service is borne thus. So is the care of the indigent in institutions, clinics, hospitals, and homes. The principle of tax-supported medical care might well be extended. There is the possibility of providing subsidized or salaried physicians in rural areas or areas of very low economic level. Finally, tax funds may be appropriated to subsidize health-insurance schemes.

European experience has shown that it is entirely practicable to distribute more evenly the costs of medical care. "So far as payment for medical service is concerned, it can be said that in most European countries the larger part of the population pays for medical service not in fees directly to the practitioners who treat them, but through regular periodic payments into a benefit society or local 'fund'."<sup>8</sup> The groups referred to are organized on a non-profit basis. They are under government supervision. Contributions are made by the members themselves, often by employers, and sometimes by the government. There seems to be no good reason why such schemes should not become popular in the United States as well. They seem to be a thoroughly feasible alternative to the present very unsatisfactory system.

*Public-Health Work.* By this term we are to understand

<sup>8</sup> *The Costs of Medical Care*, pp. 503-4.

medical service rendered to the community as a whole rather than to the individual patient and administered by governmental agencies or by private agencies closely coöperating with them. In the early days of the movement the activities of public-health officials were largely confined to communicable-disease control and the enforcement of laws and ordinances dealing with sanitation. Gradually a wider conception prevailed. It is now generally admitted that at least the provision of laboratory services, the supervision of milk, water and foods, and the responsibility for vital statistics are legitimate public-health functions, in addition to the above.

There can be no doubt that public-health work has been an enormous benefit to the American people. The epidemics of typhus, cholera, or plague which once terrified the population are now a thing of the past. However, there are many deficiencies in the system as it exists today. All students of the problem agree that lack of adequate appropriations is a continual handicap. Even in the more progressive American cities money is lacking to finance a really adequate program, while in some rural districts public-health work scarcely exists at all. One consequence of this lack of funds is that it becomes difficult to secure the highly competent and well-trained physicians which the work demands. Insecure tenure of office and the presence of political control also tend to discourage young doctors from entering the field of public health.

Two sorts of improvement are needed. First, the present types of public-health work need to be improved by larger appropriations which would make it possible to secure more and better trained physicians and nurses. Secondly, the field of public health could be broadened. There is much room for educational work. Again, medical inspection of school children and provision of dental care are regarded as proper functions of a health department. Finally, there are more and more

students of the subject who would include "the provision of special services for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of patients with tuberculosis, venereal diseases, malaria, hook-worm, or any other disease which constitutes a special health problem in the community that cannot be solved adequately and effectively by the other available medical and health agencies." <sup>9</sup>

*Personalism for Physicians.* While the best hope of securing adequate medical care for the American people lies in the modification of the present system described above there is also room for some improvement under the present system. This involves additional effort on the part of physicians and other professional men and women working in the field of health. For example, there are ways in which the physician in private practice can relieve conditions. If a considerable number would take more people as private patients without charge, the strain on overburdened dispensaries and clinics would be relieved. Again, more doctors might be willing to give time to clinics with the same effect. The heart of the matter, of course, is for men and women in the medical field to realize that in serving the poor they are serving Christ Himself and that they can have no higher aim for their professional work.

An excellent example of personalism among physicians is given in the life of Camille Feron,<sup>10</sup> a French physician who lived in modern times. Camille Feron was born in 1831 in the city of Lille. After he had finished his elementary education, he went to Paris, entered a medical school, and received his degree after some years of diligent study. He returned to Lille to practice his profession and since his first care was for the poor, he opened a dispensary at his own home. He also had a

<sup>9</sup> *Medical Care for the American People*, p. 119.

<sup>10</sup> Sister M. Christina Schwartz, *The Catholic Church Working Through Its Individual Members in Any Age and Nation Makes a Positive Social Contribution as Seen in France 1815-1870* (Washington, D. C., Catholic University Press, 1939). Ph.D. dissertation, x+106p.

wide clientele among other classes of society and received numerous honors in his profession. His reputation increased and in 1864 he was named *professeur adjoint de clinique médicale* at Saint-Saveur. In addition to his medical work he carried on other charitable activities and gave assistance, particularly with his friend, Philibert Vrau, in the work of the *Université catholique de Lille*. In connection with the work of this University the two friends founded and organized two dispensaries, *Saint-Raphaël* and *Saint-Camille*; also the *Maternité Sainte-Anne*, the *Hospice des incurables*, and the *Hôpital des enfants*. Thus the example of the holy Camille Feron shows what can be done concretely by a very zealous physician.

#### THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Certain types of physical defect involve special social problems. The blind, the deaf, and the crippled are handicapped in securing employment unless they receive special training. Even comparatively well-to-do families may find it hard to meet such problems without some assistance from the community.

Blindness especially causes serious problems for the individual so affected. It is a cause of dependency, and it affects the life of the individual in many respects. The United States Bureau of the Census defines the blind individual as one who cannot see well enough to read even with glasses. Infants must be tested to see whether they can apparently distinguish forms and objects. In treating the blind it is important to give them vocational training so that they will be able to perform some useful occupation. There is great need for expanding the educational facilities for this group as it is estimated that about 71 per cent are illiterate. Finally, a great deal could be done by correct care in the prevention of diseases and accidents which cause blindness, since about 50 per cent of blindness is preventable.

According to the Census Bureau, the deaf are those who

cannot hear ordinary conversation except by shouting or by the use of an artificial device. They are handicapped by the loss of one important sense organ, but not so handicapped as the blind. When deafness is acquired in early life, it almost invariably results in muteness, since a person learns to speak largely from hearing others speak. Dependency is not so great among the deaf as among the blind. More of the deaf are gainfully employed and less receive state or county aid. In regard to the treatment of the deaf most of the external causes can theoretically be controlled. There is a great scope for further education of the deaf. Much is being done at the present time, but a great deal more could be done.

According to the White House Conference report there are from 289,000 to 365,000 crippled children in the United States. In regard to the number of crippled adults the situation is more complicated. J. A. Kratz, Chief of Rehabilitation Service of the Federal Board of Vocational Education, estimates that about a third of a million people are crippled every year. The problem of caring for the crippled population of the United States is a big one. Also, treatment is important. Much can be done in applying the findings of medical science, and in the avoidance of accidents. In the treatment of children, emphasis should be placed on orthopedic care, on hospital treatment, and on special schools and classes for their education. In the case of adults, special attention should be given to industrial-accident prevention, to the extension of rehabilitation work, and to accident insurance.

### THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED

The problems of the mentally handicapped are often even more difficult than the problems of those who suffer from physical defect. The mentally handicapped may be classified as feeble-minded and insane, the distinction being between mental deficiency and mental aberration. The intelligence of

the feeble-minded person has never developed to normal, while the mental aberration of the insane is due to loss of his faculties or to mental disease.

*The Feeble-Minded.* Society has shown different attitudes towards the feeble-minded over a long period of time. It was only in 1798 that scientific interest in the question was first aroused by the finding of the so-called "Savage of Aveyron." This was a little boy of eleven or twelve years who was found by hunters in a forest in the Department of Aveyron, near Paris, France. The child was walking on all fours like an animal and was quite undeveloped. Itard, a professor in the school for the deaf in Paris, undertook the training and care of this boy. After giving him several years of intensive training, Itard became discouraged because he could not make a normal boy of this child, who was an idiot. Others appreciated the work that had been done, and Edward Seguin took up Itard's method of training the feeble-minded. This was known as the "physiological method." It involved systematic training of the muscles and of the senses. Much was accomplished by such methods. The feeble-minded were taught to take care of themselves in some of the routine of daily life, where they were helpless before. But the hope that they could be restored to normal mentality proved illusory. When the limitations of the method became patent there followed an alarmist period at the beginning of the present century. Studies like those of the Jukes and the Kallikaks emphasized the evil done by some feeble-minded and a wave of hysteria swept the country with the result that some states passed sterilization laws and other such extreme legislation. Due to the spreading of the mental-test movement, it was later learned that there were a great many people in the country whose intelligence was subnormal, and many of these people were leading good and useful lives. Thus the socially acceptable feeble-minded were discovered and since that time a more hopeful view has been taken of this problem.

The feeble-minded can be broadly classified into three groups: the morons, with intelligence quotients of 50-70 and mental age of from 8-12; imbeciles, with intelligence quotients of 20-50 and mental age of 3-7; idiots with intelligence quotients below 20 and mental age under 3.

It is estimated that there are about six hundred thousand feeble-minded persons in the country. For the high grade feeble-minded some education and training can be given in special classes and schools. For example, many public school systems have organized classes for the retarded child with specially trained teachers and a curriculum adjusted to his needs. The lower grade feeble-minded usually require institutional care where they can be carefully watched over and trained along special lines. In some instances the colony system has been worked out for those who are able to support themselves by manual work, yet need supervision. All of the mentally handicapped except the lowest grade feeble-minded can distinguish between right and wrong. They can remember the simple necessary truths of religion and can approach the sacraments. But there is need for much more interest in their instruction. Especially do we need schools and institutions in the United States for the feeble-minded where they can receive Catholic training.

*The Insane.* The United States Public Health Service estimates that the number of persons hospitalized for mental disease increased more than 40 per cent from 1926 to 1936. Dr. Furfey describes the situation as follows:

The greatest scourge which is threatening the health of the American people is not tuberculosis, nor pneumonia, nor disease of the heart. It is mental disease. There are almost as many patients in the mental hospitals of this country as in all other hospitals combined.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> From P. H. Furfey, *Social Problems of Childhood*, p. 110. (By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.)



Until a few years ago the outlook for treatment of the insane was very dark. About thirty years ago the hospitals for the insane attempted to do little besides keep their patients in confinement so that they could not injure themselves and others. Today with the advent of the new psychology the situation is much more hopeful and a distinct effort is being made in hospitals for the insane to give the patients effective treatment and to return some of them to normal life. Even more important is the preventive work which is being done. The mental-hygiene movement has gained considerable headway, and emphasizes the prevention of early symptoms which may later develop into mental breakdown.

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## Chapter VII

### THE AMERICAN FAMILY

SOCIAL THINKERS agree on the importance of family life. The family is the unit out of which society is constructed. All past history shows that domestic society must be strong and vigorous if society as a whole is to prosper. Social problems connected with family life are therefore crucial from the standpoint of the whole community. To see these problems in the right light, it is necessary to consider first of all the positive ideal of the Christian home. In the light of this ideal, the problems of the modern American family can be properly understood.

#### THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

*The Monogamous Family.* Monogamous marriage is the stable union of one man and one woman for mutual companionship and for the generation and rearing of children. The monogamous family is the family resulting from such a marriage. Although family life is obviously as old as human history, the monogamous family has not uniformly prevailed among all peoples nor at all times. During some periods polygamy was tolerated even under the Old Testament. It is clear, however, that such a situation was far from ideal. Monogamous marriage best serves the purposes of the family.

Other forms of marriage might, of course, serve these purposes to some extent. The race could probably be reproduced by polygamy or even, conceivably, by promiscuity or free love; but conjugal love would hardly flourish under such con-

ditions. Children would not find the security they need. Only slight reflection is necessary to convince anyone that the purposes of the family are best carried out by monogamous marriage.

*The Christian Family.* Christ restored monogamous marriage to the original status given it by the Creator in the Garden of Eden, removing the permission for polygamy which the Old Testament had permitted the Jews on account of the hardness of their hearts (Mt. 19:7-10). He raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament, thus providing a sacred foundation for the Christian family. By making matrimony a sacrament, He not only surrounded the family with a peculiar sacredness, but He also conferred on man and wife precious sacramental graces by which they are enabled to carry out worthily the duties of their state.

By these gifts the parties are assisted not only in understanding, but in knowing intimately, in adhering to firmly, in willing effectively, and in successfully putting into practice, those things which pertain to the marriage state, its aims and duties, giving them in fine right to the actual assistance of grace, whensoever they need it for fulfilling the duties of their state.<sup>1</sup>

So as a corollary from the dignity which marriage enjoys as a sacrament it must be noted that Christian marriage has as one purpose the spiritual advancement of husband and wife:

By matrimony, therefore, the souls of the contracting parties are joined and knit together more directly and more intimately than are their bodies, and that not by any passing affection of sense or spirit, but by a deliberate and firm act of the will; and from this union of souls by God's decree, a sacred and inviolable bond arises. Hence the nature of this contract, which is proper and peculiar to it alone, makes it entirely different both from the union of animals entered into by the blind instinct of nature alone in which neither

<sup>1</sup> Pope Pius XI, Encyclical, *Casti connubii* (Christian marriage), December 31, 1930.

reason nor free will plays a part, and also from the haphazard unions of men, which are far removed from all true and honorable unions of will and enjoy none of the rights of family life.<sup>2</sup>

Since Christian marriage enjoys the high dignity of being a sacrament, and since it tends by its very nature towards the sanctification of husband and wife, it forms a perfect foundation for family life. In such an atmosphere children should grow up into holiness, if only husband and wife realize the sacredness of their condition and of their obligations towards their offspring. A young Catholic wife and mother, Mrs. Dorothy Weston Coddington, has expressed this beautifully:

The crux of the matter lies in the nature of the sacrament of matrimony, and it is this that we are safeguarding. We are told that in this sacrament the priesthood of the laity reaches its fullness, that it is in fact the complement of the priesthood itself, and has a unique position in the Mystical Body of Christ. You know what that doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ means—that we are all, literally, members of Christ, that He is our head and directs our actions even as the mind directs the work of our hands: that consequently all our acts are raised to be the acts of Christ, because, as the prayer of the Mass says at the mingling of the water and wine, “we are made partakers of His divinity Who deigned to become partaker of our humanity, Jesus Christ, Thy Son.” . . .

It is a breath-taking concept, showing us the true dignity of marriage and of parenthood. In this concept, children are not a burden, they are not a duty demanded of us by the Church, a weight of responsibility by which we pay for the pleasures of the married state. They are the very fullness of the sacrament by which the Body of Christ is renewed through love. Christian parents, themselves part of the mystical Christ, are privileged to coöperate with God in the supreme act of creation.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE CHANGING FAMILY

Having considered the ideal of what the family should be, look now at the actual situation to see what the modern Amer-

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Dorothy Weston, “Why Do We Need Maternity Guilds?” *The Catholic Worker*, 3:2:2, June, 1935.

ican family is like. One can here observe that changing social conditions and a wrong philosophy of life have led to serious problems for the family.

*Changing Conditions.* With the introduction of the factory system workers were attracted from the land to become concentrated in cities. The phenomenon of large-scale urbanization and industrialization in society has placed a great deal of adverse social pressure on the home.

City life has certain advantages for the rearing of children, such as health and educational and recreational facilities superior to those of rural areas. Notwithstanding these advantages the city has a lower birth rate than the rural sections and the families are smaller.<sup>4</sup> Then too, the farm home is frequently characterized by coöperative work and play for all members of the family. This common life is not possible in the city where each individual leaves the home to seek his own interests. Thus a certain disintegration of home life occurs.

Then again, such economic conditions as unemployment and low wages make it difficult to support the family properly. In modern industry the low wage paid to many fathers, perhaps two-thirds of all, makes them unable to keep their families in reasonable comfort. A large amount of woman and child labor swells the ranks of industry to supplement the small wage of husband and father. Women in turn supplant male workers and underbid them, lowering the wage standards both of men and of themselves. Unemployment and insecurity thus have devastating effects on the home.

The effect of this insecurity can be observed in city slums. The bad physical condition of the houses makes them unfit for human habitation. These dank, ill-smelling places described as

<sup>4</sup> Net reproduction rates based on a 5 per cent cross section of the 1940 census returns show that the urban decline was from 88 in 1930 to 76 in 1940, the rural non-farm from 132 to 116 and the rural-farm from 159 to 136.

"pestilential in winter and purgatorial in summer" make a poor environment for family life. When the home is so unpleasant, the parents and children alike are anxious to leave it. Insanitary conditions and over-crowded dwellings seriously affect health. Mortality rates are high and bad moral conditions abound. These conditions are a menace to family life, as well as to physical, mental, and moral health.

*Wrong Philosophy.* Poverty is not the only cause of the breakdown of family life, for the family has declined not only among the proletariat, but also among those of a higher economic status.

This latter group consists of people who have absorbed the false philosophy of life which surrounds them. They have taken over the pagan belief that sex pleasure is an end in itself and that children are only a burden. They are victims of present-day materialism. To them the more obvious pleasures of luxury are preferable to the deep satisfactions of family life. They substitute an expensive apartment for a home, a new auto for a child. Their values of life are positivistic, and they have lost entirely the ideal of the Christian home. Truly this group is in as sad a state as those poor people who want a normal family life but lack financial means.<sup>5</sup>

#### THE PROBLEMS OF FAMILY LIFE

*Birth Control.* Birth control or contraception may be defined as the artificial prevention of conception. Voluntary continence, although it obviously limits conception, is not generally classed as birth control. It is, after all, a natural and not an artificial way of limiting offspring. Birth control underlies many family problems. Unfortunately its use is being advocated by a well organized and powerful propaganda. On the other hand, the Catholic Church has condemned it in no uncertain terms.

<sup>5</sup> M. E. Walsh, "The Decline of the Christian Home," *Pax, A Catholic Monthly*, 16:169, March, 1938.

No reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.<sup>6</sup>

The reasons for the Holy Father's strong language should be evident to every thoughtful person. Contraception has an evil effect both on the individual family and on society at large. Marriage provides a legitimate outlet for human passion, but it also involves duties and responsibilities. Passion is a perfectly legitimate part of marriage, but it is the least noble part, being basically physical and self-regarding. On the other hand, love between husband and wife, love between parent and child, tends towards unselfishness. Love teaches parents to practice self-sacrifice for each other's sake and for the sake of their children. Such unselfish love is a school of virtue. It leads to sanctity. It is necessary that the sexual element, legitimate though it certainly is, should be kept subordinate to the unselfish element in marriage. It is the evil of birth control that it precisely inverts this right order. Sexual passion becomes dominant. The sanctifying burdens of parenthood are reduced or eliminated. More and more emphasis is placed on what is merely physically pleasant in marriage, less and less on what requires generosity and unselfishness. Such a condition of affairs is not a foundation for normal and happy married life.

Birth control is also harmful to the community at large. Chapter IV. has already discussed the alarming decline of the American birth rate. This portentous condition is doubtless due principally to the spread of contraception. Remember too that whatever injures the family also injures society in general. The

<sup>6</sup> *Casti connubii*.



selfishness which undermines the life of the individual family has its repercussions in wider circles.

The advocates of contraception are eloquent in pointing out the economic difficulties which stand in the way of many married couples, making it hard for them to support large families. In many cases, it is true, these difficulties are exaggerated. A selfish couple often prefers luxuries and comforts to children. For the sake of a comfortable life and social prestige they forgo the privilege of bringing children into the world. In other cases, however, the poverty of the parents is so great that a large family would mean, not the mere loss of luxuries, but a desperate struggle for the bare necessities of life.

In this connection it is well to bear in mind that the Church has never taught that it is the duty of parents to have the maximum number of children physiologically possible. The marriage act is a privilege rather than a duty. Although each party must consent to the act at the other's request (except in certain well defined cases), there is nevertheless no injustice involved if both parties freely consent to abstain, thus limiting the number of their offspring. Some theologians have even held that one party may refuse the other's request to perform the marriage act in case of extreme poverty (*maxima egestas*) when there is no way of caring for additional children. It is well to add, however, that neither this nor any other reason can excuse actual contraceptive practices. Pope Pius XI said:

We are deeply touched by the sufferings of those parents who, in extreme want, experience great difficulty in rearing their children. However, they should take care lest the calamitous state of their external affairs should be the occasion for a much more calamitous error. No difficulty can arise that justifies the putting aside of the law of God which forbids all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfil faithfully their duties and preserve in wedlock their chastity unspotted.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Casti connubii*.

There is absolutely no real reason why, in a society like our present American society, any couple should be faced with the tragic alternative of either limiting their offspring or else bringing forth additional children only to see them suffer from want. "Christian charity . . . absolutely demands that those things which are lacking to the needy should be provided; hence it is incumbent on the rich to help the poor."<sup>8</sup> The duty of making it economically possible for poor families to have children is not to be left exclusively to private charity.

If, however, for this purpose, private resources do not suffice, it is the duty of the public authority to supply for the insufficient forces of individual effort, particularly in a matter which is of such importance to the common weal, touching as it does the maintenance of the family and married people.<sup>9</sup>

No language can be too strong, therefore, to condemn those social workers who invade the families of the poor and use their power to persuade parents to practice contraception. The poor, who are often dependent on the social worker's recommendation for the very necessities of life, frequently feel constrained to yield. Such a social worker is not only committing grave sin by counseling an act intrinsically evil, she is also injuring the social order by condoning the social injustice of withholding from the poor the means which they require for carrying out a normal family life. Right order requires that the primary rights of the family be safeguarded. This in turn requires that each family should be given, in so far as possible, a family living wage which should permit the father to support his entire family in modest and frugal comfort without being forced to limit his offspring even by the legitimate means of voluntary continence. The rights of the family are more primary and basic than the right of the affluent to their unnecessary luxuries. The attitude of those rich men is strongly to be

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

condemned who advocate the limitation of the families of the poor so that the well-to-do should be relieved of the burden of aiding them through private charity or publicly supported relief.

It is hard to see why birth control is identified in the minds of some people with American liberalism. The latter should imply a love of freedom and the safeguarding of the underprivileged in their rights. Few rights are more primary than the right to raise a normal family without artificial restraint. A great part of the support behind the birth-control movement comes from those who are anxious to shirk their duty of providing for the poor. Liberals aligned with such individuals surely find themselves in strange company!

*Abortion.* Another very serious problem to be considered is that of abortion. Although there are no exact statistics on the number of abortions in the United States, general observations indicate an increase in numbers. The Committee on Prenatal and Maternal Care of the White House Conference estimates that there are at least 700,000 abortions annually.

The significance of the abortion problem to our race can best be realized when we recall that out of 1,000,000 human beings that are conceived, between 300,000 and 400,000 perish by abortion in the first six months of their intrauterine existence; that an additional 100,000 die between that time and the completion of the first year of life, and that the remainder perish in varying numbers through the eight or nine decades of their existence.<sup>10</sup>

Not only does abortion destroy the unborn but frequently it causes the death of the mother as well.

Many of these abortions are criminally induced in violation of the laws of the states as well as of Christian ethics. There are others which, though permitted by the State, are con-

<sup>10</sup> White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *Fetal, Newborn, and Maternal Morbidity and Mortality*, Report of the Subcommittee on Factors and Causes of Fetal, Newborn, and Maternal Morbidity and Mortality (New York, Appleton-Century, 1933), p. 446.

demned as homicidal by the Church. Of this latter group Pope Pius XII says:

As to the "medical and therapeutic indication," to which, using their own words, we have made reference, Venerable Brethren, however much we may pity the mother whose health and even life is gravely imperiled in the performance of the duty allotted to her by nature, nevertheless what could ever be a sufficient reason for excusing in any the direct murder of the innocent? This is precisely what we are dealing with here.<sup>11</sup>

*Divorce and desertion.* It is obvious enough that family life is disrupted by divorce and desertion. Not only is the child deprived of the companionship and support either of a father or of a mother, but he is deprived under circumstances of quarreling and hatred between his parents, something which must be very demoralizing for him. Even death is less disruptive of family life than is this. Therefore sociologists ought to be very much concerned about this country's extraordinarily high and increasing divorce rate.

The increase is startling enough. In 1887 the rate was 0.47 per 1,000 population; in 1930 it was 1.56. In 1932 the chances that a marriage would be broken by divorce was one in 6.2. Moreover this increase has been almost constant. Except for some depression years and one war year each year since 1910 has marked an increase over the year preceding. The United States has the unhappy distinction of leading the world in its rate of divorce. From these facts it can be observed that divorce is a most serious social problem.

Desertion is a similar problem inasmuch as desertion and divorce are both open indications of a breakdown in family life. The latter has legal recognition while the former has not. Desertion may be defined as the irresponsible departure of husband or wife, leaving the spouse and perhaps offspring to get

<sup>11</sup> *Casti connubii*.

along as well as they can. Usually the deserter is the husband, and usually he is on a low economic level. For these reasons desertion has sometimes been called the poor man's divorce.

For the Catholic the morality of divorce is not a debatable question. Separation without remarriage may be allowed in certain cases, but divorce in the strict sense, divorce with remarriage, is divinely forbidden and is not permitted in any case by the Church.

The arguments used against the Church's position are well known. Critics delight in painting an imaginary picture of an extraordinarily unhappy home and then asking triumphantly whether any one would demand that under such circumstances the wronged wife should be bound to stay with her brutal husband—or the wronged husband to stay with his faithless wife, as the case may be. The answer is simple. In a really desperate case separation without divorce may be a last resort, but in the vast majority of cases husband and wife should remain together in spite of difficulties. It is far better that an individual husband or wife should suffer unjustly than it is that the whole institution of marriage should be undermined by divorce. It is strange that modern thought so seldom recognizes the obligation of the individual to sacrifice himself for the common good. The heroism of the soldier who dies for his country is commended; but the heroism of the wife who puts up with an uncongenial husband, or vice versa, for the sake of the ideal of monogamous marriage is often overlooked.

It must be remembered also that if the possibility of divorce were removed the temptation to quarrel would be enormously lessened. Often one can do difficult things when it is certain that they must be done. When married people know that they *must* get along with each other, they can usually manage to do so by mutual patience and concessions. But when the way of easy divorce lies open, they often seize this as an easy way out

and do not make the mutual adjustments which they might have made. This is too often illustrated in the daily papers where one may read of divorces granted for the most frivolous reasons. Again if a young couple were made to appreciate the fact that marriage is for life, more care and foresight would be shown in the selection of their mates. Many rash marriages would thus be prevented. By her intransigent stand on divorce the Church is not only carrying out Christ's teaching, she is benefiting society by placing the family on a sound and stable basis.

*Neglect of Children.* Modern studies of juvenile delinquency have emphasized the demoralizing effect of poor home discipline. Such studies merely confirm common sense; for a child is badly handicapped if his parents do not take their just responsibility for training his character and supervising his conduct.

Unfortunately such neglect is rather characteristic of present-day conditions, particularly in cities. Many causes have contributed to this. For one thing increased employment of mothers outside the home leads to neglect of children. Apartment-house living means that children must seek their recreation away from parental supervision. Another reason is the lack of skill and training in homemaking that prevails today. Finally, there is the refusal on the part of many parents to accept a degree of responsibility which would interfere with their own selfishness.

Catholic teaching insists that parents shoulder the duty of educating and training their children. "It is certain that both by the law of nature and of God this right and duty of educating their offspring belongs in the first place to those who began the work of nature by giving them birth."<sup>12</sup> It is true that for convenience this duty of education is usually shared with others as when parents send their children to school; but

<sup>12</sup> *Casti connubii*.

this does not relieve the parents of the ultimate responsibility. The parents' duty of training their children is a primary element in the Christian conception of the home.

#### TREATMENT OF FAMILY PROBLEMS

The Christian remedy for meeting family problems is a positive one since it is concerned with putting into effect the ideals of the Christian home. To carry out this positive program there are two methods that may be used, the personalist method of training individuals to live out these ideals and the organized method which involves such things as group education, progressive legislation, and the organization of maternity guilds.

*Personalism.* This method is particularly important. In fact there are no other problems which respond so well to personalist methods as problems of family life. This involves the teaching of young people by precept and example the great dignity of the married state. It is an overwhelming privilege to add new members to the Mystical Body of Christ. The Christian parents who comprehend this deep religious truth and sacrifice themselves for their holy work are realizing the fullness of the married state. They are willing to deny themselves material advantages and rejoice in their happy lot.

Then again individual young people should be better prepared for the specific duties and responsibilities of married life. Father Furfey writes:

Marriage being so important, preparation for it is very important, too. It is regrettable that young people sometimes do not take this preparation more seriously. This is especially true in the case of women on whom, of course, the burden of home-making principally falls. A girl who intends to practice a trade or profession for a few years and then to marry, often places all her emphasis in college on her temporary vocation and neglects her principal vocation, marriage. She should take advantage of the many excel-

lent courses offered in schools and colleges which might be helpful to the home maker; for example, courses on foods, clothing, and child psychology.

Preparation for marriage should not be limited to these formal courses. In her parental home a girl should learn the old-fashioned arts of marketing, cooking, sewing, and child care. It is only thus that she can learn to run her own household well. This personal experience in home management is necessary even for the woman who will be able to afford servants. It is beautiful to see a girl grow up competent in the traditional household arts. It is beautiful to see a married woman who can handle all home problems efficiently as they arise. Our Blessed Lady must have been like that at Nazareth.<sup>13</sup>

A very beautiful and concrete ideal of Christian motherhood is exemplified by Blessed Anna Maria Taigi, an Italian matron of the last century, who found a Christian solution to modern problems. In the life of this holy lay woman one can see the glory of Christian virtues in the home. Blessed Anna bore seven children even though her means were limited. She did not do this because of irresponsibility, but because she believed that God would provide for her family, and she was happy to be dependent on His bounty. Although poor, the family was not neglected in any way, as she was most industrious in her care of the home and made ends meet by skillful management. She was solicitous that her sons learn a trade so that they might earn an honorable livelihood and she arranged suitable marriages for her daughters. In other words, she was zealous in providing the essentials for her children, but she had no desire that they be "successful" in the worldly sense. Although Blessed Anna received as visitors many important people who were attracted by her holiness, she did not permit them to interfere with her daily duties. She was always a devoted and attentive wife to her husband Domenico and the spirit of their model home was one of domestic tranquillity rising out of

<sup>13</sup> P. H. Furfey, *This Way to Heaven* (Silver Spring, Maryland, Preservation Press, 1939), pp. 132-33.



the deep charity of its mistress. Blessed Anna felt that her most important work as a mother was the spiritual welfare of her children. Hence, she encouraged them to love their Church and its beautiful devotions, and to live virtuous lives pleasing to God. Her own life was one of ardent prayer, extraordinary love of the poor, and perfection in the duties of her state of life. Thus she was a constant inspiration to her family and to others.

*Organized Methods.* An important organized method is group education for the responsibilities of the married state. A comprehensive program of education could be carried out in our Catholic schools, where the young people could be contacted directly. Then there should be a special program for parents to train them in the teaching function of the home. Sermons from the pulpit, talks on the radio, and instructions in the Catholic press might all be used to drive home the need for serious preparation in building a Christian home.

A second method is progressive legislation. Catholics should encourage this. Our marriage legislation especially needs to be improved to regulate certain abuses such as (1) hasty marriages, (2) premature marriages, and (3) marriage of the obviously unfit. In a country such as this, limits should be placed on re-marriage after separation to cut down as much as possible this evil. Uniform divorce laws might help. These might at least minimize the divorce evil. Of course, as Catholics, we cannot approve real divorce at all. But, since divorce exists, it would be some improvement to have the laws uniform and strict. Domestic relations courts can be helpful by assisting married people to adjust their difficulties, thus forestalling divorce.

Another important method of relieving pressure on the home is financial assistance to those who are not able to meet the initial costs of parenthood. This excellent plan was originated in this country by Father Joseph J. Schagemann, C.S.S.R., who founded maternity guilds. They have been established in

a number of city parishes. Guild memberships enable each member of the parish to assist Christian parents to meet the medical costs of childbirth. Father Schagemann considers this work even greater than that of church construction or renovation. He says of it: "The building up of the living church is of greater importance than material splendor. An humble edifice in which faithful adherents of God's law assemble is more pleasing in His sight than the most magnificent temple frequented by those who refuse to do His Holy Will."<sup>14</sup>

Thus there are many possibilities of treatment for family problems and much can be done to place the American home on a more stable basis.

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<sup>14</sup> J. J. Schagemann, *Catholic Maternity Guild* (St. Louis, Central Bureau, Catholic Central Verein of America, 1937).

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## Chapter VIII

### THE PRESENT ECONOMIC RÉGIME

SOME SOCIAL PROBLEMS grow out of economic conditions. Economic problems as such are, of course, the concern of the economist; but sociologists are interested in their social aspects. Thus some overlapping exists. It would be unrealistic to study poverty, for example, without consideration of its economic background. Therefore some attention must be given to existing economic arrangements in the United States.

#### MODERN CAPITALISM

Many definitions of capitalism have been suggested. Sometimes the word is used so broadly that it becomes almost synonymous with private ownership and covers practically all systems but communism and Fascism. It seems better to restrict the term to that particular form of private ownership which now prevails in countries like our own. How shall this be defined? A purely financial definition will not be entirely satisfactory. Capitalism is a spirit as well as a financial system. It can only be defined from the double viewpoint of physical organization and spirit.

*The Physical Organization of Capitalism.* Capitalism is characterized by the private ownership and control of the means of production. The term *private control* does not exclude a certain amount of State supervision, as minimum wage laws or regulations, the latter of which exist today in the case of public utilities. Essentially business in the United States is owned and managed by private individuals. Therefore it fulfills this part of the definition of capitalism.

*The Spirit of Capitalism.* Private ownership and control is not quite enough to define capitalism. One might imagine some Utopia in which such ownership and control existed but were used so altruistically that the whole system would function for the common good. This would not be capitalism in the modern sense. There must be added to the definition of the term the qualification that capitalism involves the use of ownership and control primarily for the benefit of owners and managers and only secondarily for others. Under capitalism industrialists ordinarily pay as little to their workers and give as little to their consumers as they possibly can with the object to getting the highest possible profit. This being the case a complete definition of modern capitalism would be: *An economic system involving the private ownership and control of the means of production together with the use of these means of production mainly for the private gain of the owners and managers with only secondary regard for the rights of employees, consumers, and the general public.* It will appear from the subsequent discussion that such a system exists in the United States.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The above definition refers to the full period of capitalism rather than to the early period when the new economic principles were struggling for a foothold. This early period lasted from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century and during these years the influence of the handicraft period was still strongly felt since technology was relatively undeveloped and the factories small in size and output. It was only with the Industrial Revolution that capitalism reached its full development.

*Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution.* A striking change in the industrial system began in England about 1770 when power-driven machinery for spinning and weaving began to

spread. Such machines were relatively expensive, and the average business man could not afford to buy them. It was necessary for a very wealthy man or a group of capitalists to buy machinery, construct large buildings to house it, and even congregate these factories into industrial towns. Thus the factory system rapidly developed and with it the industrial set-up that became characteristic of capitalism. This change is called the Industrial Revolution. With the restoration of peace after the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the system spread to the Continent. Soon it reached the United States, expanding rapidly with the general use of steam power after 1850.

*The Origin and Development of the Capitalistic Spirit.* So much for the physical organization of capitalism; but what about its spirit? The system arose in late eighteenth-century England where the tone of the age was peculiarly hard and unidealistic. It was a time when acquisitiveness was made a virtue. When capitalism crossed the English Channel, it invaded a France whose faith had been sapped by rationalism and deism. Thus the movement developed in an atmosphere of dour and sceptical naturalism, in which the pursuit of gain seemed all-important. Adam Smith put this spirit into words when, in 1776, he published his classic work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. He emphasized the theory that the individual must be free to seek wealth without the restraint of governmental supervision. This was the doctrine of *laissez-faire* capitalism.

With the advance of capitalism to its period of full development the characteristics of acquisition and free competition became more apparent. Later an additional characteristic of economic rationality was added. Acquisition, in terms of money became the basic purpose of economic activity instead of the former purpose of gaining a livelihood. Free competition was inherent in the first characteristic since the extension of the

system depended on the drive for profits unhampered by social norms. Hence the right of the laborer to a living wage, the right of government to regulate business, and the common good of society were all pushed aside and almost, if not entirely, forgotten. The third characteristic of economic rationality involves the increasing use of systematic or "rational" methods to attain the basic purpose of acquisition, such as "efficient" factory management, coördination of production units, improved technology, and the accumulation of relevant business facts.<sup>1</sup>

As capitalism progressed further towards its late period, the present epoch, free competition declined and concentrated economic power took its place to a considerable extent. This was a logical development of the unregulated competition which preceded it.

This concentration of power and might, the characteristic mark, as it were, of contemporary economic life, is the fruit which the unlimited freedom of struggle among competitors has of its own nature produced. Such freedom lets survive only the strongest which is often equivalent to saying, those who fight the most violently, those who give least heed to their conscience.<sup>2</sup>

To understand the progression from free competition to economic domination concentrated in the hands of a few, it is necessary to study the place of the corporation in modern business.

#### THE CAPITALISTIC STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES

The modern economic scheme involves various forms of business enterprise such as the individual proprietorship, the

<sup>1</sup> For a good discussion of these points see W. Sombart, "Capitalism," in *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences*, 3:195-208.

<sup>2</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*.

partnership, and the corporation. There are hundreds of thousands of small owners who assume personal control of their retail stores, their small manufacturing establishments, and their farms. They have full ownership, as well as direct responsibility for the management. In the partnership there is joint proprietorship or an association of two or more individuals to carry on the enterprise. This association is regulated by some form of contract or partnership agreement and the capital resources of the concern are increased by the addition of new funds contributed by the members. Although these two forms of business enterprise are still numerous, it is the third form, the corporation, which holds the strategic place in American business. To understand modern capitalism, one must understand the corporation.

*The Corporation.* As stated above, business by corporation is the characteristic form of American business and corporations play a dominant part in our economic scheme. The key to this state of affairs is size. Modern mass production calls for a business organization supplied with more capital than a single individual or a small group of individuals can furnish. But such large amounts of capital are brought together with relative ease by organizing a corporation which Cronin defines as

a group of persons organized for a definite business under a charter secured from the state, considered as a legal personage with a right to sue and be sued; enjoying perpetuity, possessing liability limited to the amount of capitalization indicated in the aforesaid charter, and doing business through a board of directors elected by the stock members of the aforesaid corporation.<sup>3</sup>

*Corporation Dominance.* We have said that corporate business is dominant in the modern world. The following table will make this clear:

<sup>3</sup> J. F. Cronin, *Economics and Society* (New York, American Book Co., 1939), p. 41.



IMPORTANCE OF CORPORATE ACTIVITY BY BRANCHES  
OF INDUSTRY, 1937 \*

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Per Cent of Business Done by Corporations</i>
Agriculture .....	7
Mining .....	96
Electric light and power and manufactured gas....	100
Manufacturing .....	92
Contract construction .....	36
Transportation .....	89
Communication .....	100
Trade .....	58
Finance .....	84
Government, including work-relief wages.....	58
Service .....	30
Miscellaneous .....	33

\* Table modified from the testimony of Willard L. Thorp before The Temporary National Economic Committee, December 2, 1938.

The above table shows that corporation control appears in very uneven proportions in the various branches of industry. Electricity, gas, and communication are under complete corporative control. Mining, manufacturing, finance, and transportation are dominated by corporations to an only slightly less extent. On the other hand, some branches, like agriculture, are very predominantly unincorporated. But notice one extraordinarily significant fact: The branches dominated by corporations are precisely the key industries. The farmer either owns or rents his farm; but he is dependent on corporations to take his produce to distant markets. If he runs into debt, he ordinarily goes to a corporation to mortgage his house and land. From corporations he buys his electricity and his farm machinery. A corporation owns the telephone by which he communicates with the outside world. Corporations own the newspapers and magazines on which he depends for information about social and economic problems. He sells his milk to a corpora-

tion at the latter's price. As a rule, corporations buy his beef cattle and process them for market. If he raises cotton or tobacco, giant corporations usually dictate the price.

The case of the city man is not much different from that of the farmer. A grocer, for example, may feel a certain independence because he owns his own business, but he also is dependent on corporations who furnish a large proportion of the merchandise on his shelves. Furthermore, like the farmer or even more so, he is dependent on corporations for light, heat, transportation, news, amusement, possibly for a dwelling place. Indeed before he can start his business he will probably have to borrow money from an incorporated bank which is therefore in a position to dictate his business policy at least to a certain extent. Is it any wonder that even the nominally "independent" farmer or small business man feels that he does not have much economic freedom from corporation control?

*The Giant Corporation.* The situation would be less sinister if this control were exerted by a large number of tiny corporations. This, however, is emphatically not the case. A few very large corporations do a wholly disproportionate share of all corporate business. In 1933, the 45 largest transportation corporations held 91.7 per cent of the total corporate assets in that field (less taxable investments, less depreciation); the 40 largest public-utility corporations held 80.4 per cent; the 75 largest manufacturing corporations held 40.2 per cent.<sup>4</sup> These figures are somewhat startling. Not only is business controlled by corporations; it is controlled by a few corporations.

*Control of the Giant Corporation.* All this is striking enough; but there is a further point. Not only is business controlled by a few corporations, but these corporations are them-

<sup>4</sup> National Resources Committee, *The Structure of the American Economy* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1939), Table VI, Part I, p. 106.

selves controlled by a small group of men. This too is ominous. After all, the large corporation might conceivably serve as a benign device for distributing ownership and control as Hilaire Belloc<sup>5</sup> dreamed. In modern America, however, the giant corporation is anything but that. Ownership of common stock may be widely distributed—a fact which corporations love to publicize—but control certainly is not. A little group at the top controls corporation policies.

This separation of ownership and control can be accomplished in various ways. One of the most effective and best-known legal devices for concentrating control is the holding company. A holding company may control a giant corporation capitalized at \$10,000,000 by buying a little more than \$5,000,000 worth of the stock. Another holding company in turn may control this company by buying somewhat more than \$2,500,000 worth of stock. In theory the process might go on indefinitely. In practice a limit is reached sooner or later; but clever financing can carry the process well up in the scale.

A later device is the splitting of stock into voting and non-voting shares. This new method of financing corporations has become more and more popular. The promoters issue a large number of Class A shares without voting power and retain for themselves a relatively small number of Class B shares with voting power. Thus the people who invest the bulk of the capital for the corporation have no franchise or power of control. They have invested money for the ownership of stock, but this ownership gives them no share in the management of the corporation. Describing this set-up Ripley says:

The promoters have virtually paid themselves a handsome profit for the assumption of the entire directorial power, having mortgaged the property to the full amount of its original cost through outstanding bonds and preferred stock, including both assets and

<sup>5</sup> In *The Restoration of Property* (New York, Sheed & Ward, 1936).

capitalized earning power. And the amazing thing is that this final deathblow to the exercise of voting rights by the general public has brought no voice of protest. Yet the plan bears every appearance of a bald and outrageous theft of the last tittle of responsibility for management of the actual owners by those who are setting up these latest financial erections.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to these legal devices there are certain factual situations contributing to minority control or management control.<sup>7</sup> There is, for example, the psychological fact that people will not go to a great deal of trouble in defense of their minor rights. Suppose a large corporation is owned by 25,000 investors scattered throughout the country. Most of these own only a few shares of stock each. They are therefore not likely to put themselves out a great deal to defend their rights. A meeting of the corporation is called, let us say, in Wilmington, Delaware. Theoretically the 25,000 investors might hie themselves thither and vote for their rights. But, of course, they will not. Or they might sign proxies and send a representative to fight for their rights. But this would take a lot of preliminary organization and will probably not happen. What does happen is that the vast majority of the investors stay home while a few large investors, representing, say, 10 per cent of the stock, will be vitally interested in retaining control and will attend the meeting and see that their selfish interests are protected. In this way, an organized minority triumphs over an unorganized and apathetic majority, and practical disfranchisement results for the larger group.<sup>8</sup> Thus the words of Pius XI are abundantly verified: "The worst injustices and frauds take place

<sup>6</sup> W. Z. Ripley, *Main Street and Wall Street* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1927), pp. 86-87.

<sup>7</sup> *Minority control* implies control by a small group of men who, nevertheless, own a fairly significant block of stock. *Management control* is control by a group of corporation officials whose investment in the corporation is negligible.

<sup>8</sup> Cronin, *Economics and Society*, pp. 54-55.

beneath the obscurity of the common name of a corporative firm. Boards of directors proceed in their unconscionable methods even to the violation of the trust of those whose savings they administer.”<sup>9</sup>

### EFFECTS OF THE RÉGIME

An honest evaluation compels the admission that the present régime has certain advantages as well as numerous disadvantages. There is first of all a high degree of control over physical nature as represented by the development of railroads, ocean liners, automobiles, airplanes, the telephone, the radio, electrical refrigeration, power machinery, and other advances too numerous to mention. Of course, the scientists who have worked out the principles behind these characteristic features of modern life deserve a great deal of the credit for them. The pure scientist working in his quiet laboratory and the business man immersed in practical affairs have each contributed his own share to modern progress. Other advantages include the large-scale mobilization of goods and products from all parts of the world as well as the great turn-out of quantities of goods made by mass production. These factors have improved the living standard of millions of people and enable the country to support a very large population. The average per capita income has gone up and leisure time for education has resulted for many. Certainly these are notable and undeniable achievements. But they represent only one side of the picture. The disadvantages are also numerous and most disquieting. These include large-scale waste in varied spheres, a basic inefficiency that is highly destructive and the unsocial use of concentrated power.

*Waste of Natural Resources.* The natural resources of the United States are very great indeed, but they are not inexhaust-

<sup>9</sup> *Quadragesimo anno.*

ible. The uncontrolled competition of capitalism has wasted them in a most appalling manner. Consider what happens in the typical oil field as an example of waste. When oil is discovered, the land over the oil field usually belongs to various different people. In order to get as much as possible of the common stock of oil each owner drills one or more wells. Here is a first waste. Millions of dollars are wasted in drilling a large number of wells where a much smaller number might adequately serve the purpose. Then a lot of natural gas is wasted. The National Resources Board estimated in 1934 that enough natural gas was wasted in a single field to supply all the gas then being used in the United States. The escape of gas not only involves the waste of the gas itself but the waste of oil as well; for oil men depend on gas pressure to help them bring the oil to the surface. When this pressure is reduced, much oil is lost permanently. Finally, the wild rush to get out as much oil as possible before one's competitors exhaust the field means that an unnecessarily large flood of oil is thrown on the market and reserves are depleted. This story of the waste of natural resources could be repeated in other fields, as, for example, the waste of forest land.

*Waste through "High Finance."* A very considerable waste of money is due to the methods by which corporations are organized and managed. A new corporation is organized by "promoters." These men have a legitimate function and deserve to be adequately paid for their services. But promoters can abuse their position by charging exorbitant fees, by unnecessarily organizing companies merely to gain more fees, by using unfairly the inside information they gain as organizers, and in other ways. The small group of men who control a corporation are likely to vote themselves overgenerous salaries and bonuses. All these forms of financial waste must be paid for either by the consumers in the form of higher prices or else by the investors.

After the corporation is organized, further problems may arise due to certain methods of trading in securities on the stock exchanges or over-the-counter markets. Both investment and speculation have a legitimate function in the capitalistic system, but in recent decades grave abuses have occurred. Not infrequently fictitious values were given to stocks and bonds by withholding essential information from investors, and by manipulation of the stock market. These dishonest practices have been widely resented, and a great demand for regulation grew up. As a result the Securities and Exchange Commission was created on July 6, 1934 to give this regulation. The Commission has supervision over the registration of new security issues through the Securities Act of 1933, and over trading in outstanding securities through the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

*The High Cost of Distribution.* A previous paragraph has emphasized the advantages of mass production, but with mass production have come the problems of mass distribution. The village shoemaker made his shoes by hand, a slow and costly method, but he was able to sell directly to his customers. His little shop was at the same time a small factory and a retail store. Today, a large shoe factory, at Lynn, Massachusetts, for example, can make shoes with vastly less labor per pair per worker than can the individual shoemaker. These, however, must be shipped to the ultimate consumer, and the profits of the middleman and retailer, as well as the cost of advertising, must be added to the cost of production. Thus the saving made by mass production is partly counterbalanced by the expense of mass distribution. The relatively greater role played by distribution at present is brought out by estimates of the Committee on Distribution of the Twentieth Century Fund. According to these figures the number of gainful workers engaged in distribution increased 777 per cent between 1870 and

1930 while those engaged in production increased only 171 per cent.<sup>10</sup>

There are advantages in thus expanding the functions of distribution. A wide variety of goods from all parts of the world is made available to the consumer. The consumer receives in addition a number of special services such as delivery of goods, the privileges of credit and of returning goods, as well as many others. On the other hand the costs are brought up and considerable waste is involved. Some of the waste is due to inefficiency in distribution. Competitive advertising and salesmanship, bad price policies based on poor cost accounting, and the ineffective methods used by many small retailers are examples. The Twentieth Century Fund Committee mentioned above emphasizes the possibility of eliminating waste by a three-fold program of increasing consumer knowledge, the provision of operating information for retailers, and competitive regulation.

*Wasted Productive Capacity.* In a previous paragraph the technical efficiency of mass production was mentioned. But technical efficiency avails little when factories are operating at reduced capacity or when they close down. What gain is there in the fact that they *could* produce great quantities of goods, if in reality they do not do so? Wasted productive capacity was a problem even in 1929 which was a year of relative prosperity. At that time the national income was almost ninety billion dollars<sup>11</sup> and production was at a correspondingly high point. In this year of years presumably economic activity was at its best. Yet the Brookings Institution arrived at "a net estimate of 19 per cent as the amount of added production of

<sup>10</sup> Twentieth Century Fund, Committee on Distribution, *Does Distribution Cost too Much?* (New York, Twentieth Century Fund, 1939), p. 379.

<sup>11</sup> Lauchlin Currie, testimony before the Temporary National Economic Committee, Washington, D. C., May 16, 1939.



which our industrial plant was technically capable under the conditions prevailing in 1929," and stated as well that "the unfulfilled consumptive desires of the American people are large enough to absorb a productive output many times that achieved in the peak year 1929."<sup>12</sup> So much for inefficiency and waste in a banner year. If this was the situation in 1929, picture conditions in 1933 when the national income had dropped to about half of what it was at the peak. Of course there was a corresponding drop in production; factories closed completely or operated with a skeleton force. How much worse is the social waste in a period of depression and how tragic the consequences for the nation.

This terrific waste of productive capacity represents a striking social loss. In 1929, 60 per cent of America's families were below the living standard of \$2,000 a year, set by the Brookings Institution as the requirement for the basic necessities.<sup>13</sup> In 1933, widespread poverty and destitution affected many millions of families whose breadwinners were unemployed<sup>14</sup> due to the breakdown of the economic system. The wasted productive capacity which is characteristic of the present economic régime even in a good year and which becomes a social catastrophe in bad years, indicates a basic inefficiency in the whole organization. This is one of the most serious points of condemnation that can be made against the present régime.

*Unsocial Power.* In preceding paragraphs the numerous disadvantages of the present economic scheme have been outlined. Where does the responsibility lie? Surely the major part

<sup>12</sup> E. G. Nourse and Associates, *America's Capacity to Produce* (Washington, D. C., Brookings Institution, 1934), p. 422.

Maurice Leven, H. G. Moulton, and Clark Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume* (Washington, D. C., Brookings Institution, 1934), p. 127.

<sup>13</sup> Leven, Moulton, and Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume*, p. 56.

<sup>14</sup> Unemployment will be treated in detail in Chapter X.

of it belongs to the small group of men at the top who have obtained immense power by corporation control. Their great wealth and their strategic position give them economic domination and a strangle hold on the country's business. Their power is not limited to purely economic matters, but extends throughout the whole social sphere.

To a startling extent these business leaders control the details of American life. The average American is dependent on the system for his income. His employers are in a position to dictate to him in many ways. His political and social opinions are under surveillance and under threat of discharge he may be forced into a mold. Not only is the individual influenced in personal ways but public opinion is controlled to an alarming extent. Newspapers and magazines are big business corporations themselves and in addition receive most of their income from advertisers. It is therefore quite natural that they should reflect the viewpoint of this group in their news and editorials. Thus the working man and the consumer can hardly expect impartial treatment. Highly paid propaganda experts are hired to present the viewpoint of business leaders to the public. Of course, labor, farmers, consumers and other groups use organized propaganda as well; but they cannot pay for such expensive publicity as can big business.

The situation is described clearly by Pope Pius XI when he said:

In the first place, then, it is patent that in our days not alone is wealth accumulated, but immense power and despotic economic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few, and that those few are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasure.

This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying so to speak, the life-blood to the entire economic body, and grasp-

ing, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*.

of the Temporary National Economic Committee and in National Resources Committee, *The Structure of the American Economy* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1939-1940).

Business conditions are subject to rapid change. In helping the student keep abreast of the current situation the publications of the Department of Commerce are helpful, including the *Commerce Reports* (weekly), the *Survey of Current Business* (monthly), and the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (annual). The periodical literature is indexed in the *Industrial Arts Index*. The student will often find the financial pages of the leading daily newspapers a useful source of up-to-the-minute information. For more detailed data there are business services which publish current information about various divisions of business and finance. The most important of these are listed in MUDGE, I. G., *Guide to Reference Books* (Chicago, American Library Association, 1936), p. 149. They may be consulted in any large library.

## Chapter IX

### POVERTY AND WEALTH

THE YEAR 1929 was a year of extraordinary prosperity. In spite of the spectacular stock-market crash with which it closed, that year yielded the highest national income which the country has ever known. Yet even in this golden year the average American family lacked the basic necessities of life. This startling conclusion is based on a careful survey made by the Brookings Institution in Washington. Estimating that an annual family income of \$2,000 would suffice for the "basic necessities" of a family, this survey found that in 1929 almost 60 per cent of American families were below that level.<sup>1</sup> Even in boom times, therefore, poverty is not an isolated phenomenon in American life. Some sort of poverty is typical of the average American family.

#### THE EXTENT OF POVERTY

*Income Distribution in Prosperity.* Such widespread poverty in the midst of plenty arrests one's attention. In 1929 the national income was 81.1 billion dollars or 668 dollars per capita.<sup>2</sup> This would mean an annual income of \$2,672 for a family of four. This fact suggests that the widespread poverty in America is not due exclusively to a low national income. An inequitable distribution of income also plays a part. In the words of Pope Pius XI:

<sup>1</sup> Leven, Moulton, and Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume*.

<sup>2</sup> Testimony of Dr. Isador Lubin submitted to the Temporary National Economic Committee, January 11, 1939. The data were assembled by the U. S. Department of Commerce from various studies.

The immense number of propertyless wage earners on the one hand, and the superabundant riches of the fortunate few on the other, is an unanswerable argument that the earthly goods so abundantly produced in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men.<sup>3</sup>

This statement is well illustrated by the Brookings report. During 1929 the 0.1 per cent of families at the top of the economic scale, in other words, the 36,000 families with incomes over \$75,000, received an aggregate annual income of 9.8 billion dollars. This almost equalled the 10 billion dollars shared by the 11,653,000 families with annual incomes under \$1,500.<sup>4</sup> The picture has not changed for the better since the Brookings survey. In the year 1935-36 the highest 1 per cent of families received over 13 per cent of the total income of all families, while the 14 per cent with incomes under \$500 received only about 3 per cent.<sup>5</sup>

One must not conclude from the above facts that the problem of poverty could be solved by the simple expedient of dividing up the national income equally among all the citizens of the United States. In the first place, not all the national income is available for family expenditures. Some of it must be devoted to new investments if the economic system is to develop. Some of it must be assigned to public expenditure and collected in the form of taxes. Some of it must be spent on community projects not financed by taxes, such as churches, hospitals, research, and educational institutions. This leaves the total available for actual family living expenses, for food, clothing, shelter, much less than one might conclude from a hasty

<sup>3</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*.

<sup>4</sup> Leven, Moulton, and Warburton, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>5</sup> National Resources Committee, *The Consumer Spends His Income* (Washington, D. C., National Resources Committee, 1939). Other relevant data are given in National Industrial Conference Board, *Conference Board Studies in Enterprise and Social Progress* (New York, National Industrial Conference Board, 1939).

inspection of the figures on per capita national income. In the second place, the national income often shrinks to a figure far below the figures quoted above. For example in 1932 it was only 40 billion or \$320 per capita.<sup>6</sup> This was less than half the 1929 figure.

The abolition of poverty calls for two types of measures. First the national economy must be improved and even reorganized, so that the national income shall remain at a high and constant level—a point treated in the last chapter. But in addition this income must be more equitably shared. Otherwise poverty will continue even in prosperity.

*Poverty in the Depression.* If poverty is widespread during prosperity, it is much more so during depression. This is partly due to the shrinkage of the national income. More wage-earners are thrown out of work, and poverty is aggravated by unemployment. The relief rolls are swelled by employable breadwinners who are well able to support their families in more prosperous times but who are now unable to find work, usually through no fault of their own.

The year 1935 may be selected as fairly typical of the decade which followed the crash of 1929, since it represents neither the depth of the depression nor the height of recovery. In 1935 about a seventh of the population of the country was receiving relief. About a quarter of the Negroes of the United States were on relief as contrasted with less than a seventh of the whites. Relief recipients formed a roughly equal proportion of the general population in the various sections of the country; but the proportion was a little higher in the industrialized Northeast and in the Central agricultural and mountain regions, while it was lowest in the Southeast. Relief families tended to be larger than non-relief families. In May, 1935, 40 per cent of the relief families were receiving work relief. Of

<sup>6</sup> Lubin, TNEC testimony, January 11, 1939.

the urban relief cases a sixth were unemployable on account of age or physical handicap or because they were mothers with small children. Among relief recipients 40 per cent were unskilled workers and 25 per cent, semi-skilled. This is a higher proportion than holds for the general population of the country (30 per cent unskilled and 15 per cent semi-skilled).<sup>7</sup>

### THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY

There is something cold about statistics. It is all too easy to lose oneself in pages of figures and forget the acute suffering of actual men, women, and children, which they imply. It is equally easy to take the situation for granted and not be shocked. This was not the attitude of the late Pope Pius XI who said:

When on the one hand We see thousands of the needy, victims of real misery for various reasons beyond their control, and on the other so many round about them who spend huge sums of money on useless things and frivolous amusement, We cannot fail to remark with sorrow not only that justice is poorly observed, but that the precept of charity also is not sufficiently appreciated, is not a vital thing in daily life.<sup>8</sup>

Realistic thinking demands that one should view poverty in terms of the actual human misery which it causes. These concrete aspects of poverty must now be considered.

*Food, Clothing, and Shelter.* The poor must drastically reduce their expenditures for food. This does not mean that their food becomes merely unappetizing. It means that many items which are necessary for good health must be eliminated. This is particularly hard on the sick and on children. Few people die of outright starvation in the United States; but many are undernourished. As a result they do not have normal

<sup>7</sup> Summarized from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration's publication, *On Relief*.

<sup>8</sup> *Divini Redemptoris*.



resistance to illness, and they die of pneumonia, tuberculosis, or other diseases. Many of the poor lack the essential clothing for the winter, such as warm coats or even shoes and stockings. Some use old sweaters and bathing suits for underwear in an effort to keep warm. This lack of sufficient clothing is a great hardship. Many are more or less confined to the house during the cold months for mere lack of warm street clothing.

The present housing shortage bears most heavily on the poor. It is estimated that the average WPA worker can afford only \$11 a month for rent.<sup>9</sup> It is easy to see that this means very poor housing. The poor in cities are usually forced to live in dark, insanitary buildings, often rendered unsafe by fire hazards. Overcrowding puts an unusual strain on family life and renders modesty difficult. Many families lose their homes through foreclosure in times of unemployment.

The present writer can testify from personal experience among the alley dwellers of Washington that hundreds of children in the nation's capital suffer untold hardships during the winter months. In the coldest weather they roam the streets with their shoes worn through to the ground and their clothes hanging in shreds, jumping about in a perpetual motion to keep warm. Many are so hungry and underfed that they are willing to eat refuse from garbage pails. Hundreds of the alley dwellings have no lights, running water, or sanitary facilities. The physical sufferings of the very poor are most acute.

*Health.* It is a familiar fact that the poor suffer more from illness than the average. For example, the National Health Survey found that members of relief families had 17.4 days of disability due to sickness per year, while members of families in the \$1,500-\$2,000 annual income class had only 7.0 days.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> "How WPA Wages Are Spent," *Monthly Labor Review*, 50:929-30, April, 1940.

<sup>10</sup> National Health Survey, *Disability from Specific Causes in Relation to Economic Status* (Washington, D. C., National Institute of Health, 1938).

Among relief families, 5.2 per cent of the heads of families were reported as not seeking work on account of chronic disability, as against 0.5 per cent in the \$2,000–\$3,000 annual income class.<sup>11</sup>

There are various reasons for the ill health of the poor. For one thing they do not have the good food, warm clothing, fresh air, sunlight, and sanitation which hygienic living requires. The spread of contagious diseases is favored by their crowded living conditions. The poor often neglect treatment because they cannot afford to risk the loss of working time. After illness they hurry back to work before the end of their convalescence. The poor receive comparatively poor medical attention. Members of families with incomes over \$3,000 receive 46 per cent more physician calls per case of disabling illness than do members of relief families.<sup>12</sup> It is true that free clinics exist for the benefit of the poor, and the medical profession deserves great credit for much generosity in giving free service. Yet every social worker is aware of the practical difficulties that exist in the use of these clinics. It is often hard for the worker to get time off to attend the clinic. Sometimes he is made to wait for hours and is then told to come back another day. Or again he may be treated rudely by the clinic personnel. If the physician advises special diets or rest periods the poor are less able than others to follow out these orders. Can the poor be blamed if they frequently neglect to have their illnesses treated promptly?

*Education.* The children of the poor have their education cut short. Perhaps they must leave school in order to add a few pennies to the family income. If they do not leave on account of starting work too early, they find it difficult to

<sup>11</sup> National Health Survey, *Illness and Medical Care in Relation to Economic Status* (Washington, D. C., National Institute of Health, 1938, revised, 1939).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

attend due to lack of funds. Thus millions of future citizens are being denied the opportunity of a fuller life in accordance with American ideals. The deprivation of education means that the great works of art, literature, and music, our common heritage, will be denied them.

Lack of education involves lack of vocational training with denial of access to colleges and professional schools. This means that the children of the poor find it difficult, if not entirely impossible, to enter the more desirable and better paid occupations. Thus a vicious circle is established. Poverty means lack of vocational opportunity, and lack of vocational opportunity means more poverty. Thus existing society is tending towards stratification into a permanent "upper" and "lower" economic class.

*Moral Effects of Poverty.* The poor are exposed to serious moral temptations in various ways. Their indigence tempts them to steal. Overcrowded home conditions make purity and modesty more difficult. The problems of their hard lot tempt them to sins against fortitude. The patent injustices they suffer incite them to sins of hatred against the rich. Such sources of temptation or places of sin as houses of prostitution, saloons, gambling dens, burlesque theaters, and cheap pool halls abound in the districts where the poor live.

Many of the poor triumph over all these obstacles and become very holy. St. Bernadette of Lourdes was a typical slum child, as far as the external conditions of her life were concerned, when Our Blessed Lady granted her the series of visions which made Lourdes famous. Every slum district has people of heroic virtue. It is doubtful whether the poor are morally worse than the rich, although the former certainly do fall more frequently into the hands of the law. The petty thievery, immorality, and improvidence of the poor are matched by the large-scale economic injustice, selfish luxury, pride, and

avarice of the rich. But whatever the moral condition of the poor may be, it is at least clear that they are exposed to serious temptation and that this exposure represents a sin of scandal committed by those who are responsible for it.

#### TREATMENT OF POVERTY

There are, as frequently stated heretofore, two general approaches to the solution of a social problem, namely, the personalistic approach and the organized approach. This is clearly the case in the treatment of poverty. The poor may be helped either by personal almsgiving and personal service by the individual or else by organized methods such as labor organizations, social work, social legislation, or economic reform. These two approaches will now be considered.

*Personalism and Poverty.* As stated above, poverty is not caused exclusively by inequitable distribution of national wealth and national income; yet it cannot be denied that this maldistribution plays an important part. It is a fact which cannot be left out of consideration in a realistic treatment of the problem of poverty.

A more equitable distribution of income might be brought about in various ways. One way is for the wealthy voluntarily to give away their surplus wealth. This is good New Testament teaching. St. John the Baptist prepared the people for the coming of Christ by preaching precisely this doctrine. "Let him who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise" (Lk. 3:11). Our Lord taught that He would accept all acts of charity towards the poor as though done to Himself personally (Mt. 25:40). The early Christians at Jerusalem put these precepts into operation literally, the result being that there was no destitution among them. "Nor was there anyone among them in want. For those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the price

of what they sold and lay it at the feet of the apostles, and distribution was made to each, according as any one had need" (Acts 4:34-35).

With a little good will any Catholic except the very poorest could imitate this standard of conduct, voluntarily reducing his living standard to the level of decent and frugal comfort and denying himself all unnecessary luxuries. With the money thus saved he could help the poor, first the members of his own family, his relatives, or those dependent on him in some way, then a widening circle of recipients as long as his money lasted. To many this may appear an extreme and heroic thing to do. Actually it represents mere Christian common sense.

*Organized Social Work.* A simple system of personal almsgiving may perhaps be sufficient for a simple society; it is certainly not enough for a large modern city. In a small town everyone knows everyone else. If a family is poor, the fact is known at once to friends and neighbors. With good will the richer can help the poorer by direct giving. In large cities the situation is more complicated. Often families are not known even by name to other families in the same block. Indeed families living under one roof in a tenement or apartment house may not know one another. If all almsgiving were left to individual initiative, many would suffer. In a city, then, private charity must be supplemented by organized charity. In all but the very simplest societies there is need of some sort of systematic form of poor relief, either public or private. In recent years such work has become more and more highly organized. A long professional training is demanded of social workers. Various types of social workers have become specialized and have developed techniques of their own—family case work, children's work, medical social work, psychiatric social work, group work. As time goes on these techniques are becoming increasingly intricate.

All this makes for efficiency. The social worker is trained to produce results with as little lost motion as possible. New policies are evolved, not on the basis of guesswork, but on the basis of careful preliminary studies. Money is raised for philanthropic purposes by well conducted campaigns or appropriated by governmental bodies after thorough investigation and discussion.

This efficiency is certainly praiseworthy; yet there are some who feel that modern social work has lost some of the idealism which once characterized it. A certain amount of self-criticism on these lines has come from within the social-work group itself. Thus Epstein says:

In the last decade social work has taken a definite turn of the road. Different times have created different songs. Social workers themselves concede that somehow the movement today has neither the zeal, the enthusiasm, nor the missionary spirit of its early pioneers. No longer are the voices of the early Isaiahs heard in the demand of justice. Vital social reforms are left to languish and social workers as a group take but little interest in them. Except for campaign purposes, social work no longer proclaims itself as pure altruism. When it speaks, its voice is no longer that of scorching indictment, or deep-rooted convictions or of emotional authority. It has lost its spiritual equilibrium and it has become too practical to be passionate. It speaks with the polished tongue of the financier through expert press agents and high-pressure publicity. Instead of denouncing wrongs, it has become merely amiable. Its only crusades are community chest drives which it conducts with the zip-zip of a successful team's cheer leader.<sup>13</sup>

The Catholic Church boasts of a long and glorious tradition of charity. This tradition goes back to Apostolic times. It has been carried on by numberless religious communities and by lay people who seeing Christ in the poor have served them with generous devotion. There is a tendency among some

<sup>13</sup> Abraham Epstein, "The Soullessness of Present-Day Social Work," *Current History*, 391-92, June, 1928.

modern writers on philanthropy to belittle the achievements of Christian charity. There is no excuse for this. Neither is there any excuse for pious Catholics who neglect to learn from the real achievements of modern social work. Rather there is reason for the two groups to learn from one another. Let Catholic charity accept the best methods which modern social work has to offer, but learn at the same time to imitate the self-sacrifice, the spiritual enthusiasm and the warm personal love which the saints brought to the service of the poor.<sup>14</sup>

With the depression which began in 1929 there has been a tendency to reorient social work. During the prosperous decade of the 1920's it was often rather rashly assumed that any able-bodied man willing to work could obtain work and support his family adequately.<sup>15</sup> Social work, then, was to be concerned only with the socially abnormal, the delinquent, the physically handicapped, the feeble-minded, the dependent child and so on. The rest could take care of themselves. With the coming of the depression it was no longer possible to hold this oversimplified view of social work. Of the "new poor" who appeared on the relief rolls many or most were perfectly normal and self-reliant individuals, entirely able to take care of themselves except for the one fact that no employment was available for them. These people need money and nothing else. There is no good reason why their intimate personal affairs should be subjected to the same close scrutiny which is entirely justified and even necessary in the treatment of the psychopath or the delin-

<sup>14</sup> This point is developed in the author's *The Saints and Social Work* (Silver Spring, Maryland, Preservation Press, 1937).

<sup>15</sup> That this was a rather broad assumption is shown by the following study which proved that even at the height of "prosperity" there were families which were reduced to relief status through no physical or mental disability nor through any fault of their own. Gilda Castello, *Wages and Standards of Living of a Selected Group of Families of White Unskilled Laborers in the District of Columbia* (Washington, D. C., Catholic University, 1933). Unpublished M.A. dissertation.

quent. Social work technique is a good thing in itself but it is not appropriate for the normal poor.

*Social Security.* A new viewpoint is rapidly gaining ground. Poverty ought to be forestalled by living wages and social-security measures before it has developed. These measures ought to prevent the complete loss of a worker's income due to old age, unemployment, and some other hazards thus helping to prevent poverty at its source. Theoretically a perfect system of social security should prevent any person from becoming dependent except through his own fault. Thus the burden of the normal poor would be eliminated, and social work could return to its original function of caring for those who need intensive personal supervision.

As it exists today, social-security legislation in the United States is far from this ideal. Generally speaking, the cash benefits provided for the most important classes covered under the act are so small that the problems of poverty are not very much alleviated. Yet the act is enormously important because it establishes for the first time on a large scale the principle of Federal responsibility for social security. This legislation deserves to be studied not so much for what has been already accomplished as for what may be accomplished by the further application of the same principle in the future.

The first large-scale social security legislation was passed in the United States with the Social Security Act of 1935 which was amended and liberalized in 1939. This is a comprehensive law and includes provisions for the unemployed and for the aged, for the blind, for vocational rehabilitation, for public-health work, for maternal and child-health services, and other minor programs. The most striking features in the present connection, however, are the provisions for old-age and survivors' insurance and for unemployment compensation.

Old-age and survivors' insurance applies to most employees



in industry and commerce, with certain specified exceptions. The system is financed by equal contributions from employee and employer, beginning at 1 per cent of the employee's wage and gradually increasing until 1949 when they will amount to 3 per cent. Insured persons become eligible for monthly benefits at the age of sixty-five. The amount of these benefits is determined by a somewhat complicated system of rules and depends on wages paid, length of employment, and number of dependents. As the name implies, benefits are provided for certain surviving dependents. Old-age and survivors' insurance is the only social-security program entirely administered by the Federal government. The remainder of the program is administered through Federal-State coöperation.

Unemployment compensation is provided for by the Social Security Act in the form of Federal coöperation with state unemployment compensation systems. By July 31, 1937, all the states and territories had qualified for participation in the Federal program and by 1939 over 27,500,000 workers were covered.

*Reform of the Economic Order.* However much may be accomplished by personal almsgiving, organized social work, and social security, it is clear that these measures do not go to the root of the evil. Unemployment compensation is no doubt an excellent thing; but why should there be unemployment of healthy and willing workers? There is something wrong when textile mills stand idle while children are shivering for lack of warm clothing. It is a good thing that a man of sixty-five should be aided by old-age insurance; but there would be less need for such insurance if higher wages left a margin for savings so that the individual worker could accumulate savings for his own old age. The ideal solution for the problem of poverty, therefore, would be a reformed economic order in which a living wage would be provided for all who are willing

and able to work. This wage should be high enough to provide not only for immediate needs but for future contingencies. "Industry, therefore, should provide not merely a living wage for the moment, but also a saving wage for the future against sickness, old age, death, and unemployment."<sup>16</sup> If this were done, there would still be a field for social insurance; but it would be less imperative than under present conditions. Finally, social work would be necessary only for the comparatively small group of individuals who need intensive personal supervision. In the meantime, personal charity would take care of the minor hazards of everyday life, friend helping friend and neighbor helping neighbor with a tact and understanding born of the royal and gentle virtue of Christian charity.

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## Chapter X

### LABOR PROBLEMS

MODERN CAPITALISM and the factory system have led to many serious social and economic problems. The weight of these problems falls very heavily on the wage earner, on those who work in factories or are otherwise employed immediately by business. Therefore the problems of the wage earner merit particular attention. The present chapter will discuss: (1) problems relating to wages and the conditions of work, (2) problems presented by special groups of workers, and (3) the national problem of unemployment.

#### WAGES AND THE CONDITIONS OF WORK

*The Wage and Hour Problem.* The average American wage earner is not well paid. As the accompanying table shows, weekly wages have been hovering around twenty-five dollars.<sup>1</sup> Although this may not be unduly low for the unmarried worker it is distinctly low for a married man. Remember, too, that this figure represents an average. Some well-paid wage earners receive much more; but to balance them there are others who receive less. Again, this average represents the wages of a worker when he is actually employed; but, of course, the average worker is not employed all the year long. Cyclical or "hard-times" unemployment, seasonal unemployment, sickness, and other factors keep him idle a considerable proportion of the

<sup>1</sup> For January, 1941, average weekly earnings in all manufacturing industries combined were \$27.69, *Monthly Labor Review*, 52:755, March, 1941.

time. The result is that a good part of the nation's wage earners are forced into actual poverty. This helps to account for the fact that in 1935-36 a third of the country's "consumer units" (families or single individuals living alone) received less than \$780 for the year.<sup>2</sup>

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF AMERICAN WAGE EARNERS,  
MANUFACTURING, MINING, AND STEAM RAILROADS, COMBINED \*

<i>Year</i>	<i>In Dollars</i>	<i>Index of "Real" Earnings, Money Adjusted to Cost of Living (Average 1923-25=100)</i>
1909 .....	10.83	82.9
1919 .....	23.83	91.8
1923 .....	25.55	100.5
1929 .....	26.78	104.8
1932 .....	18.60	91.5
1939 .....	25.27	121.9

\* Modified from tabular material in Witt Bowden, "Wages, Hours, and Productivity of Industrial Labor, 1909 to 1939," *Monthly Labor Review*, 51:517-44, September, 1940. The last column in the above table may call for a word of explanation. The figures given refer to "real" earnings, that is, due allowance is made for changes in the cost of living. Thus if wages increase 50 per cent and the cost of living also increases 50 per cent, "real" earnings remain unchanged. In the table above these "real" earnings are given, not in dollars and cents, but in the form of "index numbers." Thus the average "real" earnings of workers from 1923 to 1925 are conventionally set at 100 and the data for other years are expressed relative to this. Thus the figure 121.9 for 1939 in the table above means that in 1939 "real" earnings were 21.9 per cent above the 1923-25 average.

A very important factor in determining the wage scale is competition among workers. Even in "normal" periods there are nearly always more workers than jobs. The jobs then go to the lowest bidder. If two equally capable men are applying

<sup>2</sup> National Resources Committee, *The Consumer Spends His Income*.

for the same job and if one demands \$20 a week while the other is willing to work for \$18, the chances are that the \$18 man will get the job. Perhaps later a third man, driven to desperation by want, will offer to take the same job for \$17. Thus he displaces the \$18 man. He realizes, of course, that \$17 is not a living wage; but at least it will buy a little food for immediate needs and leave enough for the landlord to save the family from eviction. Thus the process may go on and on until wages become very low indeed, far below the standard demanded by justice.

The classical economists saw nothing immoral in all this. After all, they argued, the worker entered freely into his bargain. Therefore no injustice is done so long as both employer and employee faithfully abide by the agreement which they have made. If the worker thinks that the wage offered him is too low, he is perfectly free to reject it.

The fallacy of the above argument ought to be plain. As a matter of fact, the average worker is not free in making his wage contract. He is driven to it by the sheer necessity of getting food and clothing and shelter for himself and his family. The wage contract is therefore different from other forms of bargaining. If a salesman offers an automobile for \$1,000 and if the prospective buyer thinks that this price is unfair, he is perfectly free to reject the offer and not buy the automobile. After all a man can get along without a car. But a man cannot get along without food. So when he is offered an unjustly low wage he is frequently faced with the alternatives of accepting the unfair wage or starving. What else can he do? He probably cannot seek work in another type of industry for he is trained for only one job. He cannot migrate to another part of the country; for conditions are probably just as bad there and, besides, there is the expense of moving himself and his family. Whatever exceptions there may be here and there the

average unorganized worker can hardly be considered free in bargaining for wages.

One must therefore recognize that the wage contract should not be left entirely to the law of supply and demand, that is, it should not be fixed by the number of workers seeking a given type of job. Ethical considerations must enter in. No matter how many men are competing for a job and no matter how cheaply they are willing to work, it is immoral for an employer to take advantage of their condition by offering them less than a living wage, that is, less than the wage necessary to provide the necessities of life for the worker and his dependents. This is the Catholic position:

Let it be granted, then, that, as a rule, workman and employer should make free agreements, and in particular should freely agree as to wages; nevertheless, there is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support the wage earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will give him no better, he is the victim of force and injustice.<sup>3</sup>

The principles which should determine hours of labor are very similar to those which apply to wages. Here again the doctrine of the classical economists left everything to free competition. If one man was willing to work twelve hours a day and another only eleven, the former got the job. But, as in the case of wages, it is unjust to allow the employer to force his will upon his workers in this way. Justice requires that hours of labor should be held within reasonable limits, and this for two reasons. First, the laborer is a human being and as such he has a right to self-development. He has a right to enough leisure for rest, recreation and enjoyment of family life. He should be allowed time to develop his mind by reading and

<sup>3</sup> *Rerum novarum*.

study. He needs time to care for his soul through religious practices. The worker who comes home exhausted after a twelve-hour day finds it hard to do these things. A second reason applies particularly to the present machine age. Advances in technology make it possible to accomplish the same amount of work with less labor. As this throws men out of work, it is only equitable that some of these workers should be retained at their jobs by cutting down the hours of labor and distributing the work. Thus shorter hours form a partial solution to the problem of technological unemployment. The point will be discussed later.

In the long run the best remedy for low wages and long hours is the reorganization of economic society in accordance with the plan of the encyclicals. In the meantime two important partial remedies are collective bargaining and labor legislation. Collective bargaining means negotiation for contracts covering wages, hours, and working conditions carried on by an employer with freely chosen representatives of his employees who bargain for the entire group. The employer agrees to pay a certain wage and to other conditions; the employees agree among other things to maintain certain production standards and not to strike. Collective bargaining is normally carried on through a labor union. Unionization will receive further treatment later in this chapter.

Wage-and-hour legislation has a fairly long history in the United States although it has only recently been well established. It has been handicapped by two factors. In the first place, courts have frequently held such laws unconstitutional on the ground that they violated freedom of contract. Secondly, there has been competition among states. If one state considered passing laws which favor the worker, factory owners would threaten to move to a neighboring state with more lax laws. Thus industry could play off one state against another



with the result that it was practically impossible to pass good labor laws on a state basis. Big business, being national in scope, can be prevented from paying less than subsistence wages only by nation-wide laws.

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, better known as the Wage and Hour Law, fixes minimum wages and maximum hours on a national basis in interstate commerce. The Act set a national minimum wage of thirty cents an hour and a national maximum working week of forty hours for industries engaged in interstate commerce or producing goods for interstate commerce. In general, machinery is provided to put higher standards in force gradually lest a sudden raising of standards should dislocate industry. With certain exceptions provided in the Act, the hour standard of forty hours a week (with time and a half for overtime) went into full effect October 25, 1940, and the wage standard of forty cents an hour is to be reached on October 25, 1945.

The Act is very important in itself for its immediate effect in increasing wages and reducing hours; but it is perhaps equally important as a legal repudiation by the United States of the old doctrine of *laissez-faire* capitalism that wages and hours should be determined by free competition and that the wage contract was a private matter in which the government should not interfere. The principle of government responsibility in the matter has not been widely accepted in the United States and even now encounters considerable opposition. It is therefore very significant that the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 in a unanimous decision rendered on February 3, 1941,<sup>4</sup> and in doing so specifically overruled a 1918 decision.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> United States v. F. W. Darby Lumber Company, 61 Sup. Ct. 451.

<sup>5</sup> One which dealt with child labor. The child-labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be discussed below.

*Industrial Accidents and Diseases.* At the present writing the Federal government and all the states but one <sup>6</sup> have workmen's compensation laws. This means that since the first of these laws was passed in 1908 the theory of responsibility for accidents has been completely changed. Under the old order the cost of industrial accidents was borne mainly by the injured worker and his family. Theoretically he could sue to recover damages; but in practice it was very difficult to do so. Under the new laws the cost of accidents is charged to industry under the theory that a certain number of accidents are bound to occur and the loss suffered should be charged to industry like any other risk. Money for compensation is usually provided by some sort of insurance scheme. There is much room for improvement however. Some states still provide very inadequate compensation. These laws should be liberalized and brought up to the standards of the more progressive states.

Special health hazards are involved in a number of industries. These may arise either from the generally unhygienic conditions of work or from hazards peculiar to a given industry. Ordinary unhygienic conditions may lead to the increased prevalence of such usual diseases as tuberculosis or pneumonia among workers. Special hazards cause unusual degenerative diseases, for example, the silicosis occurring among workers who must inhale stone dust at their work. Both types are to be included under the head of industrial diseases. Industrial diseases are somewhat harder to cover by compensation laws than are accidents. Sometimes it is hard to prove the connection between the disease and the occupation—a difficulty which hardly exists in accident cases. However, progress is being made. In more than half the states some or all occupational diseases are covered.

<sup>6</sup> Mississippi. Arkansas passed a law in 1939, but its operation has been deferred by referendum.

## SPECIAL CLASSES OF WORKERS

*Women in Industry.* At the time of the 1940 census 12,846,565 women of fourteen years and over were classified as being on the labor force.<sup>7</sup> This constitutes one-quarter of the total labor force of persons fourteen years of age and over. The presence of this large group of women workers is associated with certain problems. Experience has shown that women are very successful in a wide variety of types of machine operations. Such operations are becoming very frequent. The result is the presence of large numbers of women in industry hired at low wages. Low wages paid to women tend to lower the wage standard for men as well. The result is that girls are placed in the strange position of competing with potential husbands who therefore cannot earn enough to marry them. Another problem is the employed mother. A recent study sampled working women in two widely different types of communities, namely, the state of Utah and the city of Cleveland.<sup>8</sup> In about a third of the Cleveland families and in half the Utah families the wife or mother was employed.

There is a rather common impression that women seek work for frivolous reasons. Consequently some feel that at least married women should be discouraged from working by restrictive legislation. However, it is known that in general women do not seek work without real need. In this connection the conclusion of the study just quoted is interesting: "Regardless of marital status, the wages of working women are not casual nor supplemental sources of family support. They are

<sup>7</sup> Preliminary estimate based on a 5 per cent sample. The figure includes those with jobs, those seeking employment, and those on public emergency work. The number actually employed (except on public emergency work) was 11,148,940. From Bureau of the Census release, January 6, 1941.

<sup>8</sup> United States Women's Bureau, *Women Workers in Their Family Environment* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1941).

supporting pillars in the homes in which such earnings are found." And again, "Very few daughters keep their entire earnings, no matter how limited, for their own use." Girls generally work because they are actually forced to—not just for pin money.

Some of the problems of women in industry arise from the nature of woman herself. Women have less physical strength than men; therefore they are less adapted to bearing the strain of hard physical labor.<sup>9</sup> The morals of the working woman need special consideration. The sexes are mixed more or less promiscuously in industry, and women are likely to suffer as a result. For these reasons courts have often been more willing to admit the constitutionality of laws affecting women (and children) than of laws affecting men. A considerable body of special legislation for the woman worker has grown up. Minimum wage laws for women preceded the same sort of legislation for men. Women received earlier than men the benefits of laws limiting hours of work. Various laws bettering the conditions of employment have been passed particularly for women.

*Child Labor.* The employment of children is objectionable for many reasons. It interferes with education. Often it exposes the child to accident and health hazards. It deprives him of needed rest and recreation. Sometimes the working environment has an evil effect on his morals. A recent study by the Federal Children's Bureau is of interest here.<sup>10</sup> Of the children under sixteen studied, almost one-third had not completed the

<sup>9</sup> On the average women are somewhat more than one-half as strong as men. Continual lifting of heavy weights can have serious effects on the woman's system and seriously affect childbirth. See the Federal Women's Bureau pamphlet, *Lifting Heavy Weights in Defense Industries* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1941), pp. 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Helen Wood, *Young Workers and Their Jobs in 1936: A Survey in Six States*, Children's Bureau Publication No. 249 (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1940).

sixth grade before leaving school and almost one-fourth worked sixty or more hours per week; their median weekly earnings were \$4.15. The children of sixteen and seventeen had more schooling, shorter hours, and better pay—a weekly median of \$7.40. In both groups a considerable number were exposed to physical strain, accident dangers, and occupational-disease hazards.

Certain special classes of child workers have problems of their own. Industrial home workers do work at home for pay, such as stringing beads or making artificial flowers, which has many of the disadvantages of factory work. Under the impulse of desperate poverty very young children may work long hours for pitifully small pay. Farm labor may keep children from school and subject them to undue strain during a long working day. The children of migratory farm laborers are in a particularly hard plight. Moving from place to place as they follow the crops, they get little, if any, schooling, often work very hard, and are exposed to unhygienic and promiscuous living conditions. Among children in street trades are many whose hours and conditions of work are severe enough to interfere with their health and education.

Some, but by no means all, of these evils are remedied by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. This Act forbids the employment of children under fourteen except by their parents and then only under specified conditions, permits the employment of children between fourteen and sixteen only when they hold work permits issued by the Federal Children's Bureau, and excludes all children under eighteen from hazardous occupation. These provisions apply to all industry which is interstate in character. This law irons out some of the inequalities of state legislation. There has been a tendency for states to compete for industry by holding out low child-labor standards as an inducement for factory owners.

*The Older Worker.* The number of aged people in the United States is increasing both absolutely and relatively. There are more older people in the population now than in previous decades and they form a larger percentage of the population. In 1850, 2.6 per cent of the population was 65 years old or over; in 1930, 5.4 per cent; in 1940,<sup>11</sup> 6.8 per cent. At the same time that the number of the aged is increasing, modern industry is insisting more and more on having younger workers, especially those between the ages of twenty-four and thirty-five. This is largely the result of the increased speed of industrial processes. The age at which the worker becomes too old varies with the job. In general skilled workers can find employment more easily in the upper age brackets than can unskilled workers. Under present conditions men over forty-five are pretty much excluded from unskilled labor, while even here younger men have an enormous advantage. Even the skilled worker of fifty, if he loses his job, finds it very difficult to secure employment again.

The Social Security Act provides for old-age insurance and unemployment compensation, as has been stated already. These are a partial answer to the problems of the aged worker. But the old-age provisions do not apply until the age of sixty-five and unemployment benefits do not run indefinitely. An unskilled worker of fifty, permanently out of a job, is not much helped by this law. The employment of the middle-aged and the aged deserves a more radical solution. Light work should be provided for these men. This was always possible in a simpler society. The old farmer gradually cuts down the amount of active work which he does; but he is never out of a job. A carpenter owning a little shop gradually turns over the harder work to his growing sons. But modern industry makes little or no provision for this gradual tapering off of work.

<sup>11</sup> Final figures from the 1940 census.

In a better planned society perhaps such work could once more be provided.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

*Extent.* The depression which began in 1929 focused public attention on the problem of unemployment. Accurate statistics on unemployment are hard to obtain. The word *unemployment* itself is hard to define. How much part-time work constitutes employment? Even the unemployment census of 1937 was admittedly inaccurate. It is not surprising, therefore, that the figures published by research bodies <sup>12</sup> differ markedly among themselves. There is agreement, however, on the general trend. Unemployment is not peculiar to depressions. It exists in boom times as well. With the depression of 1929 unemployment naturally increased. It reached a peak in 1933 and then gradually fell until 1937. Msgr. Francis J. Haas estimates that the annual average number of unemployed was never less than 1,700,000 in any year in the prosperous decade of the 1920's, that the number reached a maximum of 15,000,000 the spring of 1933 and a minimum of 6,000,000 in the fall of 1937.<sup>13</sup> Preliminary figures from the 1940 census give 5,110,270 persons seeking work, 2,380,062 on public emergency work, and 1,300,687 persons with jobs but not working at the date of the census due to temporary illness, vacation, industrial dispute, bad weather, or temporary layoff.

*Causes of Unemployment.* Some of the causes of unemployment are rooted in the very nature of the existing economic scheme. As long as there are alternating fluctuations between booms and depressions, men will periodically be thrown out of

<sup>12</sup> Some of the best known are The American Federation of Labor, the National Industrial Conference Board, The Committee on Economic Security, and the Alexander Hamilton Institute.

<sup>13</sup> Francis J. Haas, *Jobs, Prices, and Unions* (New York, Paulist Press, 1941). Social Action Series, No. 19.

work. The comparatively small group of men who control giant corporations must bear much of the responsibility; they have shown little disposition to face the problem of unemployment in any thoroughgoing way. The artificial control of production and of prices is closely related to the problem. The same may be said of the generally low wage level of industrial and agricultural workers. The fact that farm prices do not always follow prices of manufactured goods bears heavily on the farmer. Often the prices of farm products fall or remain low while the prices of goods needed by the farmer rise. The result is economic hardship for the farmer and agricultural laborers are thrown out of work. All these basic causes of unemployment must be considered in connection with the reform of the economic order treated in a previous chapter. Such fundamental reform is the only satisfactory remedy.

Technological unemployment is a special problem. This term means the displacement of men by machines or other forms of technological advance. Recent decades have seen enormous progress in technology.<sup>14</sup> Technological unemployment is not due exclusively to the introduction of machines. Labor is eliminated also by the more efficient design of factory lay-outs and by other short cuts.<sup>15</sup> Of course, technological change not only throws men out of work, but creates new jobs as well. Unfortunately, it does not create nearly as many jobs as it eliminates. True, new and growing industries, the radio, airplane, plastic, air-conditioning businesses, offer new employment opportunities. This, however, is small consolation to the displaced worker who finds himself too old to train for a new and unfamiliar job. It has been said that in the long run there

<sup>14</sup> See an excellent summary in Corrington Gill, *Wasted Manpower* (New York, Norton, 1939), Chapter IV, "Machines and Jobs."

<sup>15</sup> There is an excellent non-technical summary in S. G. Hanson, *Introduction to Business* (New York, Nelson, 1941), Chapters XXX and XXXI.



is no technological unemployment—a statement well answered by the caustic dictum, “In the long run we are all dead.” All in all, the lag caused by technological advance is a serious problem. It calls for careful planning such as could be given under a system of planned industry in the manner contemplated in the encyclicals.

#### THE TREATMENT OF LABOR PROBLEMS

*Personalism.* The solution of labor problems calls for the wholehearted coöperation of employers, workers, and the general public. Each individual must do his part. Probably the biggest single thing the employer can do is to show himself willing to bargain collectively with his employees. As a matter of simple justice, the industrialist ought to set nothing in the way of the formation of bona fide unions; then he should bargain with union officials in an effort to arrive at a fair and equitable contract.

There are many examples of employers who have recognized their obligations and who have taken the initiative in granting social and economic justice to their employees, at the same time making a just and reasonable profit for themselves. Such, for example, was the devout French Catholic Leon Harmel (1829–1915), owner of cotton mills at Val-des-Bois near Rheims. He gave his workers a voice in management and instituted profit-sharing. He did everything possible to encourage wholesome family life, good recreation and the exact practice of religion. He was many years in advance of his time and his example was important in the development of French social legislation. An honorable minority of American employers show the same spirit.

Workers have their obligations, too. They should take pride in doing their work well and in developing the skills needed in their jobs. The worker should take an intelligent interest in the

problems of modern industry and should familiarize himself with the social and economic principles which must underlie a sane solution for these problems. Each worker should be ready to do his share for the labor movement, joining the union of his occupation, paying his dues, and sticking loyally by his fellow employees in the case of a just strike.

The general public cannot be indifferent to labor problems. Each citizen should know the facts. That is his primary obligation. He should know the general principles of social justice and he should know, at least in a general way, the facts about the contemporary labor movement. One meets too many educated Catholics who are opposed to the very principle of collective bargaining—in direct contradiction to the encyclicals. The citizen should support the labor movement by his words and actions, by buying union-made goods and by supporting workers in every just strike.

*The American Labor Movement.* The labor union has been the workman's traditional defense against injustice. By means of a union, as already explained, workers bargain collectively with their employers who are thus unable to force down wages by playing off one working man against another.

The history of organized labor in the United States goes back over a century. Its real beginning is usually dated in 1827 when the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations was formed in Philadelphia. It was more than half a century later that the first really permanent and national organization was formed when the American Federation of Labor was organized under the leadership of Samuel Gompers. In 1935, a group broke away from the A.F. of L. under John L. Lewis and formed the C.I.O. (Committee for Industrial Organization, now the Congress of Industrial Organizations). The railroad brotherhoods are a strong body independent of the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. In addition there are a very few bona fide independent

unions (not company unions). A fair estimate of the total strength of organized labor in the United States at present would be about eight million members, some of whom are not in good standing because of unemployment, and consequent non-payment of dues.

The problems of labor organization in the United States are many. First of all, there is the problem of increasing membership. A total of eight million may appear impressive, but it is only a small part of the country's entire labor force of 52,840,762.<sup>16</sup> It is true that of this total 10,508,514 are farm workers, most of whom are unavailable for organized labor, and an unspecified number are independent business and professional men. But when due allowance is made for them the fact remains that labor unions do not include more than one-fifth or one-sixth of all eligible workers. What makes the situation worse is that unorganized workers are to be found particularly among those who need organization most, the unskilled and underpaid.

Another handicap is the open antagonism existing between the two principal organizations, the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. This is partly a question of difference of policy. The A.F. of L. favors craft unions, that is, unions embracing all the workers in a particular trade, usually a rather skilled trade. The C.I.O. favors industrial unions, that is, unions taking in all the workers in a given industry without regard to craft. This division is the cause of much loss of influence.

A further problem of labor unions is the winning of favorable public opinion. Since the press of the country as a whole is controlled by big business, the general public is not given a fair picture of the activities of organized labor. During strikes the brutality of the police is passed over in silence, while every instance of violence on the part of the strikers is emphasized.

<sup>16</sup> Preliminary figures from the 1940 census.

The strike is represented as the work of outside agitators, presumably communists, and the real grievances of the workers are concealed.

Some of the difficulties of organized labor are its own fault. Racketeering exists here and there, and public officials have not always been vigorous in suppressing it. Jurisdictional disputes often result in needless strikes. It is regrettable that these evils are prevalent especially in the building trades where the general public comes in most direct contact with organized labor.

In spite of the grim determination of big business to block labor organization, some progress is being made. The long-time trend is towards unionization even though progress is slow. This trend is a good thing. The papal plan for social reconstruction supposes the existence of employers' and employees' organizations. Labor unions are a necessary preliminary step towards its realization.

*The National Labor Relations Act.* Besides unionization the other great resource of the working man in his fight for social justice is the enforcement of labor legislation. The strict enforcement of minimum-wage and maximum-hour laws is exceedingly important. Several other laws have been mentioned above, laws regulating the labor of women and children, laws providing old-age pensions and unemployment compensation. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935, popularly known as the Wagner Act, stands somewhat apart from these other laws because its specific purpose was to protect the freedom of industrial organization itself.

This act created the National Labor Relations Board of three members who are appointed by the President and serve for five years. The Board investigates cases in which workers charge an employer with denying them the right to organize and if the charge is supported by evidence, the Board orders the employer to "cease and desist." When a responsible group

of workers demand it, the Board orders an election to determine whether the employees of a given firm wish to select a particular union to represent them. After the election the union selected by the majority of the employees becomes the exclusive bargaining agency for all employees. Therefore, when the election has shown that the union has a majority in the plant, the employer is required to bargain collectively with it, and with it alone. The Board can order the reëmployment of men discharged for union activities and decisions of the Board are enforceable by the courts. If the employer refuses to obey, he may be punished for contempt of court. Decisions of the Board may be appealed to the courts. Up to September 30, 1941, twenty-nine cases had been carried to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Board was upheld in twenty-seven cases and its rulings set aside in the remaining two.

The National Labor Relations Act establishes a new principle in labor relations. It recognizes the inherent right of workers to organize and the obligation of the government to protect this right when it is interfered with. Although the Act and the Board have been opposed by some powerful employer groups, nevertheless substantial progress has been made under the Act towards safeguarding the rights of increasingly larger numbers of workers to form their own unions to bargain for them.

*The Papal Plan for Economic Reconstruction.* Modern American industry is obviously a highly complicated structure. If it is to function both justly and efficiently there must be a great deal of careful planning and coördination. As a matter of fact such planning exists under present conditions, but it is subject to certain serious defects. For with unimportant exceptions economic planning is now carried out by owners and managers within broad limits set by law and without any effective participation by employees or the general public. The

result is that the benefits which follow accrue primarily to those who do the planning, and secondarily and at times only remotely to all others.

A little consideration ought to show why this present arrangement is defective. First of all, it tends to breed injustice. Three groups have a vital interest in industry—employers, employees, and consumers. If all the policies are to be formed by the first of these groups and if the others lack the power to guard their interests, then it is almost inevitable that injustice will appear. For it is only human nature to seek one's own interests and if the employer group does all the planning, they will naturally tend to place their own welfare first and to give only secondary consideration to the welfare of others.

There is another defect in the present set-up. It tends to be not only unjust but inefficient. If planning is to be well done, it should be turned over to the most competent available people. In certain problems which concern the general management of a plant, the employer group, owners and managers, will usually be able to make the wisest decisions. But there are many areas also in which the expert workers who do the actual production can contribute the best ideas. Finally, the general public, represented by the State, can and should play its part. Of course the State cannot give sound advice about the technical problems of manufacture. But there are larger problems concerning the proper relationship to be maintained between the wages and prices of an industry as compared with those of other industries. These problems cannot be satisfactorily solved without some participation by the general public in the planning.

The papal plan is simply a scheme to make sound planning possible through an organized economic society. This plan would make it possible to achieve the two great desiderata, namely, to protect human liberty and to secure abundant production of goods and services for all the people. The entire plan can be stated briefly.

In the first place, all employers, workers, farmers, and professional persons would be organized in their respective callings. Thus all the employers and all the employees in the steel industry would form one occupational group. Likewise all the employers and all the employees in the textile industry would form another. The same would be done in transportation, mining, agriculture and all the other industries, each to have its own occupational group. Finally each of the professions, law, medicine, teaching, social work, and the rest, would be organized in a similar fashion. It is to be clearly understood that each group of employers and each group of employees within each occupational group would be represented by spokesmen of their own choosing. Hence the whole plan is essentially democratic in structure and operation.

With each occupational group, steel, textiles, and the others, a government representative would sit whose function would be to guide and direct, but not to dictate. Finally each occupational group would be tied to every other through the medium of a national body, consisting of freely chosen representatives sent to the national body by the occupational groups themselves. This national body would, like the subordinate occupational groups, be presided over by government representatives, whose function likewise would be to guide and direct, but not to dictate. The purpose of this national body is to aim to preserve a proper balance between the wages and prices of all occupational groups, and to secure the fullest possible production for the whole nation and to promote the common good of all. Thus the individual liberties of all workers, employers, and professional persons would be safeguarded through their exercise of free choice in selecting their representatives, and the amplest opportunity would be afforded for planning for full production of goods.

Under this plan there would be also separate organizations for employers and workers. These would meet separately to

decide their own problems, but they would also meet together within their appropriate occupational groups to discuss the problems common to their industry, and which are of concern to all the persons in that industry. Conferring together in this way, with the guidance and direction of government, the two parties would come to decisions on wages, hours, prices, output, and all the other matters pertaining to their industry.

Planning being good and necessary for each industry, it is equally good and necessary for all industry. Therefore there is need for some sort of a national economic council in which representatives of all industries and professions would meet under the chairmanship of government to discuss problems affecting all economic life, and to plan for the economic well-being of the entire nation.

The papal plan even goes beyond the boundaries of each nation. It contemplates international coöperation. When the day arrives when an occupational group system is established in each country, the Holy Father would have all the countries linked together under the plan. Dependence of nation on nation dictates this need. He declares in this regard:

Further, it would be well if the various nations in common counsel and endeavor strove to promote a healthy economic coöperation by prudent pacts and institutions, since in economic matters they are largely dependent one upon the other, and need one another's help.<sup>17</sup>

A word should be added on the part that the State should play in this entire plan, that of "directing, watching, stimulating, and restraining as circumstances suggest or necessity demands." The need of the State in the system is evident. The interests of the general public can and must be protected. At the same time, the enterprises of the occupational groups would be voluntary and self-directed, and the personal liberties of all

<sup>17</sup> *Quadragesimo anno.*



individuals would be guaranteed so long as such liberties did not conflict with the common good. On the other hand, if the groups proved lethargic or inefficient or attempted to promote their selfish interest at the expense of the general welfare, the State would be in a position to stimulate or restrain as circumstances might require. Hence the need of State participation in the functioning of the occupational group system.

The plan just outlined is not chimerical and imaginary. Some of its principles are already being applied in the wage committees of the Wage and Hour Division of the United States Department of Labor. Under the Wage and Hour Law an equal number of employer and worker representatives meet with a like number of "public representatives," and they make recommendations to the Wage and Hour Administrator who fixes the minimum wage for the industry on the basis of their recommendations. Likewise in the railroad industry a tripartite body, consisting of the railroad union, employer, and government representative, fixes wages for the entire industry. These procedures are in no sense complete applications of the papal plan, but contain the substance of some of its more essential features.

With the extension of the right of free organizations among workers, and especially with the wider extension of Christian living among the whole nation there is no reason why the papal plan will not yield at an early date the beneficent results it is designed to yield, in individual freedom and abundant production of goods.

At the present day two great systems of national economy are before the public eye, the democratic and the totalitarian. The democratic economy has the great advantage of freedom. It encourages individual initiative. But it unfortunately tends to be inefficient. The totalitarian economies on the other hand sacrifice freedom, but their proponents claim that they are

efficient. Many serious thinkers feel that they are faced with the unhappy choice between these two economies and must sacrifice either liberty or efficiency. The papal plan provides a common-sense way out of this dilemma. By *planning* it maintains efficiency; by *voluntary* planning it maintains liberty.

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## Chapter XI

### THE PROBLEM OF CRIME

THE CRIME PROBLEM is very much before the public at present. Newspapers talk about "crime waves." There is a new tendency to make heroes out of the police. New laws, often very severe ones, are being passed in the effort to stamp out crime. Organizations are being formed to study the subject and recommend action. All this is good in so far as it argues an increased public interest in a social problem; but, unfortunately, this interest is not always very intelligent. Emotion often predominates over reason. To solve the crime problem intelligently it is necessary to examine all the facts. Then, and then only, will it be possible in the light of established principles to find the best solution.

### THE EXTENT AND COST OF CRIME

*The Amount of Crime.* It is very difficult to get reliable statistics on crime. From the very nature of the case, crime is shrouded in secrecy and many offenses never come to light. The one best source is "crimes known to the police."<sup>1</sup> But these refer only to the more serious offenses and besides police departments are not always accurate in their record keeping or reliable in their reporting. After all, it is to the interest of a given city administration to be able to report a decrease in crimes during its term of office. Again, there are many crimes

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, issues a quarterly bulletin of crime statistics, using crimes known to the police as an index.

which are not reported to the police. Bribery is seldom exposed. Victims of blackmail are likely to remain silent. The dishonesty and injustice of big business seldom appear as "crimes known to the police," yet according to the reports of the Comptroller of the Currency, some sort of dishonesty was found in 61.4 per cent of the national bank failures in the period 1900-1919. Fraud in income-tax returns is pretty general, yet only occasionally does it come to light. All in all, not much is known about the amount of crime.

Such figures as do exist seem to show that there is a long slow trend towards the increase of crime. Gehlke made a careful analysis of the crime rates from 1900 to 1930 and concluded that there was a slight upward trend during these years, even when due allowance was made for traffic violations and drunkenness.<sup>2</sup> But there was no evidence of a sensational national "crime wave" such as is frequently discussed in the newspapers.

*The Cost of Crime.* It is hard to estimate the cost of crime. Part of the loss cannot be expressed in dollars and cents. How, for example, can a value be set on the thousands of lives lost by murder each year? The loss of life is more than a monetary loss. Even when an estimate is confined to the purely economic loss caused by crime, the question is very complicated. There is, first of all, the direct loss to the victims of crimes, in the form of property destroyed, money stolen, and the like. Then there is the cost of police systems, courts, prisons, the sums paid for private watchmen, for safes and bank vaults, for locks and bars and bolts. Finally there is the loss to society as a whole caused by the waste of the energies of convicts and criminals who might have been engaged in socially useful occupations. Perhaps the best available estimate is that made for the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement by Dorr and

<sup>2</sup> President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends in the United States* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1933), pp. 1123-37.

Simpson. It was based on figures gathered between 1929 and 1931.

#### ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST OF CRIME IN THE UNITED STATES \*

Federal cost of criminal justice.....	\$ 52,786,000
State police forces .....	2,660,000
Cost of criminal justice in places over 25,000.....	247,700,000
State penal and correctional work.....	51,720,000
Private protective service.....	10,000,000
Armored car service.....	3,900,000
Fraudulent use of the mails.....	68,000,000
Insurance against crime.....	106,000,000
Loss of the productive labor of prisoners and law-enforcement officers .....	300,000,000
Insured losses due to crime.....	47,000,000

\* Compiled by Morris from National Commission on Law Observation and Enforcement, *Report on the Cost of Crime* (Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office, 1931).

#### THEORIES OF CRIME

The first thoroughly elaborated theory on the causes of crime was advanced by Cesare Beccaria (1735-1794) in his *Essay on crimes and punishments*. Those who held this theory formed what is called the *classical school* of criminologists. Briefly, Beccaria taught that the criminal commits his crime to secure some selfish advantage. In order to stamp out crime it is therefore merely necessary for society to make the punishment so severe that it will outweigh any possible advantage. Thus the criminal will realize that "crime does not pay" and he will desist. This theory appealed to many, but it soon became clear that it would have to be modified. Not all crimes are committed after the cold-blooded weighing of advantages and disadvantages which Beccaria supposed. Some crimes are committed under sudden impulse or passion; others are committed by the insane and feeble-minded who cannot reason clearly.

A new approach to the problem was made by the Italian criminologist, Cesare Lombroso (1836-1909) who examined

and measured a large group of criminals and concluded that many, but not all, criminals belong to a definite physical type. These "born criminals" are physically degenerate and a life of crime is more or less inevitable for them. This theory was exploded by the careful work of Dr. Charles Goring among English criminals. In spite of certain recent attempts to revive it, the theory of the "born criminal" is now generally abandoned by scientific criminologists.

One thing is common to Beccaria, Lombroso, and other early criminologists. They all believed that crime was due to one simple cause, or to a very few causes. Modern research has demonstrated conclusively that this is not so. There are many motives for crime. One man steals because he is hungry; another, just for a lark; another, on account of a queer, illogical compulsion; another, because he is the dull-witted tool of some clever crook; and still others for other reasons. If there are many causes of crime, then it is logical to have many different methods of treatment. Each criminal ought to be studied separately to determine just what led him to commit his offense, and then he should be treated accordingly. One man needs a stiff term in prison. Another can safely be set free under careful supervision. Another needs treatment in a mental hospital. The old ideal was to make the punishment fit the crime; it is more logical to make the punishment fit the criminal. Such is the viewpoint of what is often called the *new penology*.<sup>3</sup> Actually, the new penology is not new; it is as old as common sense.

### CAUSES OF CRIME

It has already been noted that there are many causes of crime. It will be useful to examine some of the principal of these, beginning with those within the individual himself and

<sup>3</sup> Penology is the science of punishment from *poena* meaning "penalty."

proceeding to those due to the social situation in which he is placed.

*Heredity.* It is an easily observable fact that many criminals have criminal offspring. From this one might easily conclude that crime is inherited. This popular belief seemed to receive scientific confirmation in studies of degenerate families such as the Kallikaks or the Jukes in which thievery, prostitution, vagrancy and all sorts of immorality were found to occur in generation after generation. The theory that crime is hereditary, however, has not stood up well under recent more careful examination. Remember that the young child usually lives with his parents. Therefore, he receives from his parents not only certain inborn characteristics but also the influence of his parents and his home surroundings during his early formative years. If the child of a criminal follows in the footsteps of his criminal parents, this might be due just as well to his parents' example as to heredity. In fact, recent research has consistently tended to show that the former is more probable. There is little or no evidence for the heredity of criminal characteristics which will stand up under scientific scrutiny.

*Physical Factors.* Kind-hearted people used to say sometimes that what the criminal needed was a hospital, not a prison. He committed crimes, not because he was bad, but because he was sick. This was a charitable theory; but recent studies have shown that it seldom applies. There are a few definite physical diseases which do affect conduct. The principal one of these is epilepsy. Sometimes shocking crimes are committed by a man in an epileptic seizure. Then there is a form of sleeping sickness called *encephalitis lethargica*. Possibly there are a few others; yet on the whole crimes due to such diseases are rare and recognizable. Of course, physical conditions may lead indirectly to crime. The stress and strain of normal adolescence may sometimes work itself out in antisocial conduct. A nerv-



ous, sickly youth may consequently lack the sane, balanced attitude towards life which would make it easier to overcome temptation. Nevertheless, all in all physical factors do not have a very great relative importance.

*Feeble-Mindedness.* Early in the century there was a great hue and cry about the importance of mental deficiency as a cause of crime. A number of criminals were observed to be feeble-minded, and the conclusion was drawn that feeble-mindedness made them criminals. Recent research has not tended to confirm this view. Careful mental testing of a large number of convicts has shown that they average only a little below the general population in intelligence. Remember that the less intelligent a criminal is, the greater likelihood of being caught. If all criminals could be caught and tested, their average intelligence would show up better. A few crimes, of course, are definitely due to mental defect. An adult with the mind of a three-year-old child is as incapable as the latter of telling right from wrong and he may innocently blunder into crime. The higher-grade feeble-minded can tell right from wrong, but they cannot make subtle moral distinctions nor can they appreciate clearly the motives for being good. So they too contribute their quota to crime. Feeble-mindedness then is responsible for some crime, but its importance is readily exaggerated.

*Insanity.* It is certainly true that some crimes are committed by insane persons who are not responsible for their actions; but the number of such persons is small. Sutherland<sup>4</sup> sums up the results of examinations by psychiatrists of criminals admitted to state prisons by saying that the proportion found to be insane is generally not over 5 per cent. In some institutions it is less than 1 per cent. These figures are the best available but they are not very reliable because it is hard to draw the fine

<sup>4</sup>E. H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology* (Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1939), p. 107.

line between normal and abnormal. It is not known what proportion of non-criminals are insane, but probably it is less than the proportion among criminals. Insanity, therefore, accounts for a certain percentage of crime, but not for a very large percentage.

*Race and Nationality.* Crude statistics of arrests and convictions show definitely higher proportions for Negroes than for native whites. It is easy to conclude from this that Negroes are especially prone to crime. This facile inference must, however, be modified by two considerations: (1) The police are subject to the same prejudices as everybody else; so are judges. As a result of such prejudice Negroes are often unfairly treated. This statement is based on a number of careful studies.<sup>5</sup> Hence the reliability of the statistics on Negroes is open to serious question. (2) A large proportion of the Negro population group is forced to live under social conditions which are associated with crime. Poor housing, poor environment, lack of educational and economic opportunity, and lack of settled residence are associated with crime among native whites as well as among Negroes, but Negroes are exposed to these demoralizing influences more frequently than are native whites.

Older studies of crime among the immigrant group, based on crude statistics, indicated a larger proportion of criminals than among the native white. But later studies making correction for age variations indicate that the immigrants contribute less proportionately than the native whites rather than more. Because mobility increases criminality and also because the immigrants like the Negroes are forced to live in slum areas, they do have a higher crime rate than people of their own

<sup>5</sup> The evidence is summarized by Thorsten Sellin, "The Negro Criminal: A Statistical Note," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 140:52-64, November, 1928, by W. D. Weatherford and C. S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (Boston, Heath, 1934), pp. 424-40; and by E. H. Sutherland, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-123.

nationality in the mother country. Finally, recent studies show that the second generation of immigrants sometimes have higher and sometimes lower delinquency rates than the native whites of native parentage.

*Poor Home Conditions.* Popular belief and scientific research agree when they both emphasize the importance of poor home conditions as a factor in crime. A great many conditions may be included under this head. It is normal for a child to be brought up by his two parents; he is handicapped, therefore, if one or both parents are dead or if his parents are separated or divorced. Bad example from criminal, immoral, or alcoholic parents can be very demoralizing. Well-intentioned but incompetent parents may injure their children by discipline which is too lax, too severe, or worse still, too inconsistent. Overcrowding at home may lead to premature sophistication in regard to sex. Absence of recreational facilities may incline the child to delinquency as a reaction from sheer boredom.

*Neighborhood and Community.* Various studies of delinquency have shown that both juvenile delinquents and adult criminals tend to come from certain areas of a city, while other areas contribute very few offenders. This association between crime and neighborhood is not hard to understand. Districts where there are plenty of play space, good community services, and few undesirable influences, do not ordinarily produce many delinquents. On the other hand, districts where there is little space for wholesome play and a superabundance of pool rooms, cheap theaters, houses of prostitution, saloons, gaming houses, and the like, are fertile grounds for delinquency. The more these influences abound, the more delinquency grows; and the more delinquency grows, the greater are the neighborhood temptations. It is a vicious circle. Thus crime becomes established as a sort of neighborhood tradition. Arrest is no disgrace and a police record gives a sort of prestige. The child born in

such a neighborhood may not become a criminal; but he certainly grows up under a handicap.

*The Socio-Economic Order.* Crime may be looked upon as a revolt of the individual against society. In judging the moral issues involved, one may be inclined to assume that society is completely right and the offender is completely wrong. This, however, is not always so. Many crying injustices exist in the social and economic order. When a man is driven to lawbreaking by these injustices, his action is often understandable or, in case of dire need, even justifiable. One cannot blame an unemployed father who steals the necessities of life after having exhausted every other resource to get food for his hungry family. Without justifying the wrongful act, one might sympathize with the petty pickpocket or shoplifter who goes to jail while corrupt politicians accept bribes in security and greedy financiers steal millions under the protection of clever lawyers and legal technicalities.

The importance of the defects in the present socio-economic order was brought out by the well known study which Dr. and Mrs. Glueck <sup>6</sup> made of the work of Judge Baker Foundation and the Boston juvenile court. The court and the Foundation's child-guidance clinic were regarded as a perfect set-up for the treatment of juvenile delinquency in accordance with the standard causes listed above. Yet the study showed that 88.2 per cent of the children treated had additional offenses in the five years following. Dr. William Healy, the director of the clinic, speaking with rare and admirable objectivity, admitted that the study showed that present methods of treating delinquency do not go deep enough. He said:

If the roots of crime lie far back in the foundations of our social order, it may be that only a radical change can bring any

<sup>6</sup> Sheldon Glueck and Eleanor T. Glueck, *One Thousand Juvenile Delinquents* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1934).

large measure of cure. Less unjust social and economic conditions may be the only way out, and until a better social order exists, crime will probably flourish and society continue to pay the price.<sup>7</sup>

Thus in the case of crime one is led once more to the familiar conclusion already reached by several other paths: The only complete cure for the evils of modern society is, together with a reform in individual living, a thorough-going reform of the social and economic order. Measures for the solution of social problems which leave these fundamental issues untouched are at best palliatives and partial solutions.

#### THE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF CRIME

Any fundamental treatment of the crime problem is apparently impossible without the reformation of the social and economic order. Society, however, cannot remain passive until the happy day of that reformation. Something must be done about crime here and now. This is directly a responsibility of the State. But, since crime is closely bound up with sin, the Church has also an obligation. Therefore, the rôle first of the State and then of the Church in the treatment and prevention of crime will now be considered.

*Police Systems.* Obviously society cannot punish a criminal unless it first apprehends him. Therefore, good police work is necessary. These criticisms can be made of American police: (1) They are often ill trained, frequently selected for their jobs on the basis of physique rather than intelligence, and poorly equipped. This is particularly true of rural law enforcement officers. (2) They are not infrequently venal and corrupt. Some police departments are honeycombed with politics,

<sup>7</sup> William Healy, Augusta F. Bronner, and Myra E. Shimberg, "The Close of Another Chapter in Criminology," *Mental Hygiene*, 19:208-222, April, 1935, p. 221.

the result being that the weak are punished while the powerful go free. (3) Police systems are often poorly coördinated. In the past particularly there has been poor coöperation between city, state, and Federal officers.

The police reply to criticism by emphasizing the difficulties of their work. They point out, for example, that the politicians who interfere with their efficiency are elected by the people, that an outmoded system of criminal law and procedure hampers them, and that existing systems of local boundaries halt the police but not the criminal. Some progress has been made in recent years in the improvement of police work such as better selection and training of personnel, the use of scientific techniques of crime detection, and improved organization. However, a great deal remains to be done.

*Socialized Courts.* Humane and understanding judges have always shown an ability to grasp the offender's viewpoint and to adjust punishment to the particular offender; but judges with less understanding have often caused untold harm through lack of insight. In recent years an attempt has been made to do systematically what good judges have always tried to do, that is, to individualize punishment. Courts organized to do this are called *socialized courts*. To qualify as *socialized*, a court should be equipped to do three things: (1) It should be equipped to make, before the trial, a thorough study of the offender, his home, and his social background. This is done by trained social workers serving as investigating officers. (2) It should keep complete records, not only of the legal disposition of the case, but also of its social aspects. (3) It should be able, for certain kinds of offenders, to enforce legally a course of treatment by means of a staff of probation officers, without putting the offender in a prison or other institution. Of course, prisons will still be needed. Probation work is intended to supplement rather than supplant institutional care. But the work of pro-

bation officers is exceedingly important. These officers should be very carefully selected and trained.

At present only a few American courts are socialized, principally juvenile courts and domestic-relations courts. But certain features of the socialized court begin to appear in adult criminal courts. For example, it is not unusual for such courts to have a staff of probation officers. The work of juvenile courts is particularly important; for it has been shown over and over that young men and boys commit a very large proportion of the crimes, while the older criminals usually began their careers in early youth. If the problem of the juvenile delinquent could be solved, adult crime would almost take care of itself. The work of the highly socialized juvenile courts, therefore, is most significant.

*Prisons.* Although many of the early horrors of prison life have been mitigated with the passing of time, American prisons on the whole are badly in need of drastic reform. The majority of these institutions are characterized by overcrowding, poor food, harsh and unintelligent discipline, and enforced idleness. It would be too much to say that such prisons are useless. After all, since they are repugnant places the threat of imprisonment may act as a deterrent. Again, prisons keep society temporarily safe from the criminals locked up in them. But the public has a right to expect more of our prisons than this. It has a right to expect that when a prisoner is discharged he will be better equipped to avoid crime than he was when he entered. Prisons should be able to reform their inmates. This they have failed to do in the majority of cases. On the contrary many former prisoners testify that they left prison embittered against society and anxious for revenge. Moreover the association of younger with older criminals teaches the former many of the refinements of criminal technique. Thus prisons often become schools for crime.

Numerous efforts towards prison reform have been made in the past, but fundamental changes are called for today by serious students of this problem. Prisons should be modernized and enlarged so that overcrowding will be eliminated. While not losing sight of their function as penal institutions, prisons should nevertheless treat their inmates humanely enough that the latter will not become embittered. The economic problems of the prisoner should not be neglected. If the prison can teach him a trade so that he can earn his own living on discharge, it will be a big advantage. Many discharged criminals know no way of making a living except through crime. Prison schools and libraries are important as educational agencies of reform. Finally, a good parole system should supervise the discharged convict. Parole has been much criticized recently. Certainly many existing parole systems show great room for improvement. But the idea itself is certainly valid. Parole means that the convict leaving prison shall be supervised. The only alternative to this is *not* to supervise him. That is certainly a less wise alternative.

*Prevention.* Much emphasis has recently been placed on the eminently sensible view that it is better to prevent crime before it is committed than to attempt to treat it afterwards. Prevention should be on a community basis. The program usually involves a survey of the constructive and destructive neighborhood factors and the use of organizations and civic groups to carry out a comprehensive program. In the schools visiting-teacher work is a hopeful approach to crime prevention. The visiting teacher is trained as a teacher and as a social worker and has the duty of caring for children who show indications of problem behavior before they have reached the status of delinquents. The police are also emphasizing crime prevention by the establishment of crime prevention bureaus and police boys'



clubs. This is an approach which needs to be extended. An example of an effective intramural guidance program is the citizenship work done by the George Junior Republic in Freeville, New York, where the boys are trained to be useful citizens and to play a constructive part in community affairs. Extramural guidance programs are well exemplified in child-guidance clinics. These are becoming more numerous and do excellent work. The Big Brother and Big Sister program may also be considered an example. Boys' clubs and recreational programs have been used for a long time as effective methods of crime prevention.

#### THE CHURCH AND THE CRIME PROBLEM

The Church is not directly responsible for the treatment and prevention of crime. That is a function of the State. But serious offenses against the civil law are usually sins as well, the Church being necessarily concerned about these offenses because she is concerned with sin. Thus indirectly the Church is very much interested in the crime problem.

The Church makes her contribution first of all through her moral teaching. Men will not avoid crime and sin unless they see very clearly why they should do so. The State can suggest one reason—the threat of fine or imprisonment. But this reason is not cogent enough. It is not exactly a reason for avoiding crime, but rather a reason for avoiding detection. What the prospective criminal needs is a reason for avoiding crime whether he expects to be found out or not. Such reasons exist and they are of two kinds, reasons of the natural order, such as the intrinsic ugliness of sin, and reasons of a supernatural order, such as the fear of losing heaven, the fear of hell, and the fear of offending an infinitely good and loving God. The State ought at least to teach its citizens the reasons of the natural

order for avoiding crime; but generally speaking this is not done very much or very effectively. Then of course, a State like the United States of America, which is officially neutral in religious matters, cannot teach the supernatural motives at all. The result is that generation after generation of children is going through the public schools with no very clear or definite idea of why they should avoid crime and sin at all costs even when there is no danger of detection. Catholic schools and colleges have a great opportunity here. In these institutions Catholic youth can be taught what non-Catholic youth is not being taught in school, namely, the full truth about right and wrong.

The Church does more than merely teach theoretically; she gives effective aid towards the carrying out of her teaching. This she does by her ministry of grace. It is theologically certain that man cannot long avoid serious sin without the aid of divine grace. Grace therefore is a remedy for crime and grace is made abundantly available to mankind through the Mass and the sacraments and the other means of grace which the Church affords her children. The great Sacrament of Penance is especially instituted to aid man in his warfare against sin. Here his past offenses are wiped out; he receives prudent advice from the confessor; he is given the graces he needs to overcome future temptations. Here is a means for the prevention and treatment of crime which cannot be measured statistically; but faith teaches that its efficacy is exceedingly great.

The Church in her campaign against sin does not confine herself to the general measures of teaching and of administering divine grace. She also encourages special works for the prevention and treatment of delinquency. Her record is impressive here. Consider, for example, the work of Saint Mary of Saint Euphrasia Pelletier (1796-1851), foundress of the Good Shepherd nuns of Angers under whose inspiration some 110 con-

vents were founded, or the work of Saint Mary Michaela Desmaisières (1809-1865), who founded a Spanish community of somewhat similar purpose. When these two holy women came on the scene, the attitude of society towards delinquent girls was incredibly heartless and cruel. Through their humane and understanding insight hope was restored to countless discouraged girls, and society as a whole was given a more intelligent attitude towards the problems of youth in the modern world.

Prevention is, of course, even more important than cure. Here was a field in which Saint John Bosco (1815-1888) was peculiarly at home. This extraordinary saint spent his life working among boys demoralized by the temptations of a large modern city, namely, Turin. He founded a large institution for them in a slum district there and provided them with all sorts of facilities ranging from recreation to thorough vocational education and, for homeless boys, complete twenty-four hour a day care. Moreover he founded a religious community, the Salesians, who spread and continued his work not only throughout Italy but in many other countries near and far. St. John Bosco was famous for what he called his *preventive system* which he contrasted with the *repressive system* then generally in use. He believed in preventing crime and preventing it not by threats of violent punishment but by religion, kindness, and understanding. The saint gave credit for this system to the Blessed Virgin who had appeared to him in a vision and said, "Not by blows but by gentleness and charity you must win over these boys." He certainly carried out this precept with singular success and managed to suffuse a spirit of charity and joy through his whole institution, a spirit which still survives to impress the visitor half a century after St. John's death.

THE WHITE-COLLAR CRIMINALOID<sup>8</sup>

A criminal is no less a criminal, of course, because he wears a white collar; but often the wealthy and influential offender is able to escape detection, or, if his offenses are known, they are either not recognized as crimes or else they are excused and overlooked. Therefore, his problems deserve separate treatment. The crimes of the white-collar criminaloid may be divided into three classes:

(1) Sometimes this type of criminal commits the standard crimes like any other criminal, but he is able through his money and political influence to avoid prosecution and to remain an outwardly respectable member of society. The police who arrest a poor and shabby man without hesitation are very reluctant to arrest an influential and moneyed man. If by any chance he is arrested the case can often be hushed up through political influence. District attorneys need not prosecute a case if they decide not to; it takes very unusual courage to prosecute a man with enough influence to ruin one's political career. If the case does come to trial, a rich man can hire very clever lawyers who have at their command a thousand legal subtleties and technicalities by which they can hamper the progress of the case. The wealthy offender can afford to pay his lawyers many times the salaries received by the prosecuting attorneys. Often the latter are overwhelmed by sheer weight of legal talent. The

<sup>8</sup> The word was apparently coined by Edward Alsworth Ross who wrote: "The immunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of new sins has brought into being a class for which we may coin the term *criminaloid*. By this we may designate such as prosper by flagitious practices which have not yet come under the effective ban of public opinion. Often indeed they are guilty in the eyes of the law; but since they are not culpable in the eyes of the public and in their own eyes, their spiritual attitude is not that of the criminal. The lawmaker may make their misdeeds crimes; but, so long as morality stands stock-still in the old tracks, they escape both punishment and ignominy." *Sin and Society: An Analysis of Latter-Day Iniquity* (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1907), pp. 47-48. See also an excellent treatment in Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology*, pp. 36-43.

result of this is that the dominant group enjoys a considerable freedom to break the law with impunity. The white man in the South can beat up Negro men or molest Negro girls with little or no fear of punishment. Men with enough money can run gambling houses and immoral resorts with the tacit consent of the police. Members of a dominant political machine can indulge in bribery and graft with the knowledge that the district attorneys approved by the machine itself will not prosecute them.

(2) Sometimes the white-collar criminaloid violates the spirit of the law yet avoids punishment because he has not violated the letter of the law. Modern business is so extremely complicated that it is difficult for legislation to keep pace with its complexities. Laws are passed to forbid certain unjust practices; but before these laws are on the statute books business may find another loophole. Thus actions can remain strictly legal in the technical sense although they outrage all sense of decency. The antitrust laws are a good example. These laws were passed to break up monopolies which were forcing the public to pay unfairly high prices. The laws were designed to restore competition in the industries in which it was interfered with and thus force prices down to a just figure. The trusts were broken up; but the desired competition was not restored. In some industries, by tacit understanding, small corporations accept the prices which the large corporations set.

(3) In some cases the white-collar criminaloid violates neither the letter nor the spirit of the law—for the very good reason that he, or rather the class to which he belongs, sometimes has enough power to prevent the passage of laws which would hamper his immoral activity. Very efficient lobbies are maintained in Washington and state capitals by various interests to see that no laws are passed which would interfere with their questionable practices. If public opinion becomes

too strong and the passage of a law seems inevitable, the lobbies try to weaken it or perhaps to insert a "joker" which would frustrate the law. While the Washington lobbies are busy on Capitol Hill, organized propaganda is set in motion throughout the country and the effort is made to represent opposition to the proposed law as a spontaneous uprising of the voters instead of the selfish creation of a small organized group. Surely few things are more obviously desirable than the safeguarding of the life and health of the people by the prohibition of unsafe, adulterated, or misbranded foods, drugs, and cosmetics. Yet such legislation as exists has been passed in the teeth of the bitterest opposition and even now after many years of effort the most recent legislation leaves much to be desired both as regards the law itself and the machinery for its enforcement.

There is no mystery about the solution of the problem of the white-collar criminaloid. It is simply a matter of insisting on the good American principle of equal justice before the law, a principle which must not merely receive lip service but be put into practice. In law enforcement, a beginning might well be made with the white-collar criminaloid. The campaign against crime cannot hope for much progress unless public opinion really respects the State in its function of law enforcement, and public opinion cannot have this respect as long as the State claps the petty thief into jail while it smiles at the white-collar criminaloid, as long as—in the words of Pope Pius XI—"the State which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed."<sup>9</sup> It is, therefore, imperative that any program for clearing up the crime problem emphasize the destructiveness of the upper-class criminal.

<sup>9</sup> *Quadragesimo anno.*

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## Chapter XII

### WAR AND PEACE

CRIME INVOLVES the breakdown of social control within a nation. War involves the breakdown of social control in international relations. Each represents the collapse of sane and reasonable methods and an appeal to violence. Of the two, war is the more serious because it causes more widespread destruction and because no satisfactory substitute for war has been worked out.

The cause of war in general lies in human imperfections but so interwoven are the problems of the modern world that the cause of a particular war is often difficult to determine. However that may be, the evils involved in war as a means of settling international disputes are widely recognized.

#### THE EVILS OF WAR

*Casualties.* The cost of war in terms of deaths and injuries cannot readily be conceived. The last World War is a striking example. The direct loss amounted to eight and a half million deaths; but this by no means tells the whole story. There were other deaths due to epidemics, famine, exposure, the disorganization of medical service, and to other indirect causes. It has been estimated that the total number of deaths due in some way to the World War was as high as forty millions. In addition the sufferings of the wounded and the disabilities of the blind and crippled who were rendered unable to return to their former occupations should be considered. There are men so

CASUALTIES IN THE WORLD WAR, 1914-18  
(U. S. WAR DEPARTMENT FIGURES)

	<i>Killed and Died</i>	<i>Wounded</i>	<i>Prisoners and Missing</i>	<i>Total Casualties</i>
Allies .....	5,152,115	12,831,004	4,121,090	22,104,209
Central Powers	3,386,200	8,388,448	3,629,829	15,404,477
Total .....	8,538,315	21,219,452	7,750,919	37,508,686

horribly maimed that they cannot appear in public. There are the gruesome "basket cases," armless and legless men, unable to do anything for themselves but to think and suffer. Add to this terrible price the sufferings of widows and orphans, made so by the War, and one can form some idea of what the world conflict cost in terms of human suffering.

*Economic Factors.* War is a great destructive force, even when measured in dollars and cents. Again the first World War is an example in point. The value of property destroyed has been estimated at 337 billion dollars. This is more than the total national wealth of the United States, estimated at 322 billion in 1937. Think what could have been done with these vast amounts thus wasted. One or two billion dollars spent for medical research might have yielded new cures for half a dozen diseases. War is expensive even in times of peace. Nations are still paying for the last World War and will continue to do so for a long time to come. In 1938, a year of relative peace, it is estimated that the countries of the world spent 17.6 billion dollars for armament. The United States gradually increased its expenditures until in 1938 the annual expense passed the billion dollar mark.<sup>1</sup> At the present time no one can predict what the

<sup>1</sup> G. Colm, "The Cost of Arming America," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 214:8-13, March, 1941.

costs of the second World War will be. Only one thing seems certain. The expenditure will be so great that the cost of the first World War will seem small by comparison.

*Moral Aspects.* The physical destructiveness of war can be estimated in terms of the number of dead and wounded and the value of property destroyed. There is, however, no way of estimating the amount of sin due to war. The essential malice of sin is concealed in the secrecy of men's hearts and is known to God alone. Yet the moral destructiveness of war is by far its most horrible effect. War unleashes tremendous hatreds. Men accustomed to hold their brute passions in check now give them free rein. By a strange inversion of moral standards, hatred is considered almost a virtue. Chastity declines in the face of the more or less officially organized prostitution which accompanies armies to the front. Mendacious propaganda deliberately circulated by governments and the treachery and hypocrisy of diplomats further demoralize the people. Add to this the despair and cynicism which accompany war, and one gets some sort of a picture of what war means in terms of sin. It is true that war may involve also the practice of some incidental virtues—courage, loyalty, resignation to God's will; but the results of these virtues are probably much less significant in the long run than the sins due to war.

#### THE ETHICS OF WAR

*Can War Be Just?* The Catholic Church teaches that under certain conditions war can be justified. The Old Testament teaches that Almighty God gave His explicit approval to certain wars of the Jews. The Crusades were wars actually organized with ecclesiastical encouragement and approval. The Church has canonized rulers like St. Henry II of the Holy Roman Empire and St. Stephen I of Hungary who led their

people in war. It is therefore impossible for a Catholic to be an absolute pacifist and to hold that all wars of every sort are always wrong.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the Church has always taught that *war is subject to the principles of morality*. For a State to wage a morally unjustified war is simply murder—and murder on an enormous scale. It is a tragic truth that the application of the moral law to international affairs is widely disregarded in the modern world. "Before all else, it is certain that the radical and ultimate cause of the evils which We deplore in modern society is the denial and rejection of a universal norm of morality as well for individual and social life as for international relations."<sup>3</sup> The Church recognizes no "reason of state," no "military necessity" as the sole excuse for a war which is not in accordance with the principles of morality.

Although Catholic theologians recognize the possibility of a "just war," one should remember that there can never be a war in which both sides are right.<sup>4</sup> Even a "just" war is just only on one side; the other side is in the wrong and its action is unjustified. When both sides are taken into consideration, one can readily see that even in the case of a "just" war, war as a whole represents a terrible moral evil.

St. Thomas lays down the classical Catholic doctrine on the conditions necessary for a just war.<sup>5</sup> According to him the following conditions are necessary: (1) War must be declared by the supreme authority of the state; all private wars are

<sup>2</sup> A few scattered theologians have suggested that all *total* wars are wrong, that is, all wars of the peculiar modern type. But this view seems hard to defend, especially in the case of defensive war. It has never been approved by any large number of theologians.

<sup>3</sup> *Summi pontificatus*.

<sup>4</sup> Of course both sides may be in good faith; but this does not alter the fact that one or both are objectively wrong.

<sup>5</sup> In his *Summa theologiae*, II-II, Q. 40, A.1.

therefore wrong. (2) There must be a just cause; those who are attacked must have merited attack through some fault of their own. (3) The belligerents must have a right intention, that is, the intention that good be furthered or evil avoided. Later writers have added a fourth condition which is implied if not expressed by St. Thomas, namely: (4) The means employed by the belligerents must not be wrong in themselves.

*Application to Modern Conditions.* It is important to consider the four conditions laid down by St. Thomas as applied to modern life.

(1) The first condition is seldom violated in modern times. Wars are normally waged with the approval of the central authority of the State given in whatever way custom or a written constitution provides. However, the question sometimes arises whether the action of the government represents the will of the people. Catholic political theory has consistently held that a people may set up whatever form of government it desires, provided only that such government promotes the common good. This being the case, it seems logical that the people should be given some voice in deciding such an important issue as the choice between peace and war. According to Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State to Pope Benedict XV, the "general disarmament" which that Pontiff desired would include the following condition: "Sovereigns to be deprived of the right of declaring war—this right to be reserved to a popular referendum or at least to Parliaments elected by the people."<sup>6</sup> Here two ways are suggested of giving the people a voice in the declaration of war, the use of a referendum or action through elective assemblies.

The dictatorships refuse both these methods. The people

<sup>6</sup> D. A. MacLean, *The Permanent Peace Program of Pope Benedict XV* (New York, Catholic Association for International Peace, 1931), p. 15.

are given no opportunity to express their will. No elections are held, or if they are, they are conducted under conditions which deprive them of all practical value. People are driven to slaughter at the dictator's will and there is no legal way for them to protest. Democracies are in a far better position. By regular elections the people are enabled to express their will and they can turn out of office any set of national leaders whose policies do not square with the popular will. War can be declared in a democracy only by the freely chosen representatives of the people. The only defect in this system is that international tensions may arise suddenly between elections and under these conditions there is no machinery for consulting the people's will. In the campaign of 1916 such slogans as "He kept us out of war" helped to elect President Wilson. After the election the President made certain efforts in the direction of peace, urging the belligerents to accept a "peace without victory," but events moved rapidly and on April 2, 1917, he felt it necessary to ask Congress to declare war. President Wilson felt that popular sentiment backed him in this action. He may very well have been right. But the point is that the President and Congress were forced to make the decision on their own responsibility. There was no way to give the people an opportunity to express their will.

The possibility of using the referendum before a declaration of war deserves serious consideration. Military men have urged that international situations develop so rapidly that in case of sudden attack the delay incident to a referendum might be fatal to a nation's cause. This is a real difficulty. Perhaps it could be eliminated by confining the referendum to wars outside the nation's own territory. In any case, no nation has thus far considered the war referendum feasible enough to adopt it. The nearest equivalent has been the use of the referendum on conscription. For example, the government of Australia held a

referendum on this subject on October 28, 1916, and again on December 20, 1917.<sup>7</sup> At the present writing the Canadian government is preparing a referendum on the same issue. There seems to be no reasonable objection to such a thoroughly democratic procedure.

(2) Considering the terrible destructiveness of modern total war, the problem of the proportionately serious cause presents a real difficulty. A cause must certainly be an exceptionally grave one to justify the loss of forty million lives as in the case of the World War of 1914-1918. There are indeed ideals more precious than human life. There are ideals whose preservation demands the supreme sacrifice. But in a concrete case a nation must examine the issues seriously and deliberately and face the question whether the points of controversy in this or that particular conflict are grave enough to justify the probable loss of life. When historians examine the issues involved in any past war in a dispassionate spirit, they are often forced to conclude that the main point settled by the war was merely whether this or that particular set of politicians should rule over this or that territory. Idealistic goals set before the people often mask the ambition of some leader craving power. Many men fought for Napoleon, thinking that they were bringing the benefits of liberty to oppressed peoples. The dispassionate verdict of history is that the Napoleonic wars were due principally to one man's inordinate ambition.

Generally speaking it is much easier to find a just cause for a defensive war than for an offensive war. For the right of self-defense is a primary right of nations as well as of individuals. This right is forfeited only by very serious reasons. "We support wholeheartedly the adequate defense of our country," said the bishops of the United States in "The Crisis of Christ,"

<sup>7</sup> The measure of conscription was defeated by a narrow margin on both occasions.

November 11, 1941. It is hard to see how any reasonable man, for example, can question the right of the United States to defend herself against the attack of Japan which began with the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

(3) A just war must be waged with a right intention; that is, it must be waged with the intention of furthering justice and not for selfish ends. It is immoral to fight with the idea of revenge, to gratify a lust for cruelty, or to feed an overweening ambition. Even when an objectively just cause is present, these evil intentions can render a war unjust.<sup>8</sup> A modern dictator who stirs up his subjects to a high pitch of cruelty, glorifies war, and shouts about revenge is, therefore, waging an unjust war even if the cause of the war itself should be, in the abstract, just.

(4) A just war must employ right means; for the use of means wrong in themselves can never be justified even for the attainment of a worthy object. According to Catholic doctrine the end can never justify the means. A relevant question in this connection is the morality of bombing attacks on non-military objectives involving the slaughter of non-combatants, women and children, the aged and the sick. Can such bombing be justified even on the part of a nation fighting for a just cause? It seems, to say the least, extremely doubtful. The killing of a soldier actively defending an unjust cause can be justified. He is an unjust aggressor. But can the same be said of little children playing quietly a hundred miles behind the battle line?

Another means which is all too common in modern wars is

<sup>8</sup> "Potest contingere ut si sit legitima auctoritas indicentis bellum et causa justa, nihilominus propter pravam intentionem bellum reddatur illicitum." "It can happen that the authority of him who declares the war might be legitimate and the cause just and yet the war itself would become illicit on account of a wrong intention." St. Thomas, *Summa theologiae*. II-II, Q. 40, 1, c.



the use of deliberately deceitful propaganda. By the use of such propaganda a government can often persuade its own citizens, and possibly the citizens of other nations, that its cause is just when actually this is not the case. The world has been shocked at the openness with which Hitler has advocated the use of deception and falsehood to attain the ends of his party. On communist propaganda it is sufficient to quote the statement of Pope Pius XI that it is "so truly diabolical that the world has perhaps never witnessed its like before."<sup>9</sup> It is a matter of sober scientific fact, proved by numerous studies, that in the first World War both sides made wide-spread use of propaganda, varying from one-sided presentations of the nation's cause to the deliberate fabrication of news stories which had no basis in fact.<sup>10</sup>

*Individual Conscience and War.* The obligations of the individual in wartime form a moral problem distinct in some respects from the morality of war as it applies to a nation as a whole. To what extent must the individual examine the justice of the cause for himself? To what extent can he blindly follow his leaders?

One thing can be stated with complete assurance. If a man knows with certainty that his country's cause is unjust, then he is bound in conscience to refuse to fight. It is certainly immoral to fight for the triumph of evil, and no flag waving, no misplaced enthusiasm, can ever in the least justify such immorality. The soldier who kills an enemy with the full certainty that his country is wrong is without the slightest doubt a deliberate murderer. On the other hand if a man is certain that

<sup>9</sup> *Divini Redemptoris*.

<sup>10</sup> Convenient summaries will be found in Leonard W. Doob, *Propaganda, Its Psychology and Technique* (New York, Holt, 1935); William Albigh, *Public Opinion* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1939); and Frederick E. Lumley, *The Propaganda Menace* (New York, Century, 1933).

his country's cause is just, then again his duty is plain. He must obey his government and aid his country, even to the extent of making the supreme sacrifice of his life.

The above principles are clear; but unfortunately they are not always easy to apply. The average man may not be able to make up his mind with certainty whether a particular war is just or unjust. Usually all the factors in a given situation are not known to him nor has he the ability or time to discover them. What is the individual's obligation under these circumstances?

In answering this question Catholic theologians propose a distinction between two classes of soldiers. The first class includes (*a*) soldiers already under arms, (*b*) citizens subject to conscription, (*c*) foreign mercenary soldiers hired before the outbreak of the war. These are bound to obey the authorities and to fight if they are told to do so. They are not bound in conscience to investigate the justice of the war unless circumstances arouse in their minds a strong suspicion that the war is unjust. Only in this latter case, if they become convinced after investigation that the war is unjust, may they refuse to fight.

On the other hand, two sections of men, (*a*) volunteers and (*b*) foreign mercenary soldiers not already hired at the beginning of the war, are required to investigate the justice of the war and not to fight unless they can satisfy themselves that the war is just. The essential distinction, it will be seen, between the soldiers in the preceding paragraph and those just mentioned is that the former are not ordinarily bound to investigate and must in any case give their government the benefit of the doubt, whereas the latter *are* bound to investigate and must *not* simply *assume* that their cause is just.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The statements of the last two paragraphs have been based on a careful investigation of the opinions of eleven representative theologians from St. Alphonsus down to contemporaries.

*Nationalism vs. Patriotism.* In Catholic thought, patriotism is a virtue, but unlimited "nationalism" is a vice. Excessive nationalism leads men to hate the citizens of other nations and to disregard their rights. The Holy Father has condemned this spirit which neglects "that law of human solidarity and charity which is dictated and imposed by our common origin and by the equality of rational nature in all men, to whatever people they belong."<sup>12</sup> It is clear that excessive nationalism has prevented international coöperation and thus been the chief cause of modern war. The Axis countries particularly, through their doctrine of race supremacy and the glorification of the State, have made a fetish of nationalism.<sup>13</sup>

If the Church condemns nationalism, she is equally emphatic in praising patriotism.

Nor is there any fear lest the consciousness of universal brotherhood aroused by the teaching of Christianity, and the spirit which it inspires, be in contrast with love of traditions or the glories of one's fatherland, or impede the progress of prosperity or legitimate interests. For that same Christianity teaches that in the exercise of charity we must follow a God-given order, yielding the place of honor in our affections and good works to those who are bound to us by special ties.<sup>14</sup>

The essential distinction between excessive nationalism and true patriotism is that the former recognizes no moral principles, whereas the latter is a love of country imposed and regulated by the laws of morality. Love of country, like all one's other attitudes, must be subject to God's law. A man who puts loyalty to country above obedience to God acts directly contrary to Catholic doctrine. His attitude is summed up in the

<sup>12</sup> *Summi pontificatus*.

<sup>13</sup> An excellent and well annotated bibliography on all aspects of nationalism is K. S. Pinson, *A Bibliographical Introduction to Nationalism* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1935). See Carlton Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York, Macmillan, 1926).

<sup>14</sup> *Summi pontificatus*.

immoral catch-phrase, *My country right or wrong*. This is not patriotism. It is downright immorality.

### CURES FOR WAR

*Peace as a Positive Ideal.* Many people think of peace as a mere absence of strife. This is incorrect. Peace is something positive. It is a condition which arises out of charity. It implies an active willingness to help one another. In the international sphere, peace means not merely that nations refrain from war; it means that they are to help one another by mutual coöperation. This is the Catholic peace ideal.

*Peace and Personalism.* The basis of peace is love and love must begin with the individual. Therefore, nations can only be at peace in the real and positive sense when the people of each nation have a real love and respect for the people of each other nation. Such a condition would, of course, make war impossible. One does not kill those one really loves. War would be impossible if mutual love existed among the citizens of the various countries of the world. Nobody expects the United States to get into war with Canada. Why? Basically, because the citizens of the United States regard Canadians as persons like themselves. Of course there are economic and other causes for this friendly feeling. But, whatever the causes may be, the fact remains that as long as it exists there will be no danger of war with Canada. Real mutual respect and esteem exist among the people of these two great countries and, therefore, all along the extremely long border there are no forts, no military posts, no Maginot lines. Why could not this happy condition obtain between all countries? Of course, it could—if the people of these countries felt towards each other as do the people of the United States and Canada.

If peace fundamentally depends on the attitude of citizens towards citizens of other countries, then the path of duty is

plain. Each and all can very effectively help the cause of peace by developing an intelligent respect and real charity towards the men of other nations. This is the personalistic solution to the problem of war and it is a very practical one which can be put into effect at once. One should begin by trying to acquire an intelligent appreciation of the culture of other nations. There may be real defects in other nations as there are certainly defects in one's own. But one should try to see virtues as well as defects. It should be remembered that very often the citizens of other countries are not responsible for the misdeeds of their governments. Many of these citizens may be blinded by propaganda or coerced by tyrannical governments. Likewise one should not blame the plain citizen for the crimes of the tyrant who governs him!

Once there is insight into the characters, the problems, the achievements of men of other nations, it becomes easy to put into practice the Christian precept of loving them. One ought to refrain from using insulting nicknames for foreigners, and ought not to ridicule their national characteristics. Americans ought to welcome every opportunity to meet immigrants and foreign visitors and should eagerly listen to them and try to understand their point of view. When traveling in foreign lands one ought to try to develop a sympathetic understanding. Thus the realization will become general that, although it is one's primary duty to stand by the citizens of one's own country, still there exists the additional duty of showing some concern for all mankind. One must really love men of other nations. If such an attitude became general, wars would be impossible, and peace could be taken for granted.

*Peace Organizations.* Work for peace should begin with the individual but it should not end there. Large-scale organization is necessary to cope with the large-scale problem of war.

Before the first World War peace organizations had grown to a gratifying extent. They worked to bring about some curtailment of military expenditure, to secure permanent treaties of arbitration, and to foster peace education.

After the War there was a reaction against militarism. The peace movement profited by this and once more began to grow rapidly. New organizations sprang up. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded even during the War. The National Council for the Prevention of War was founded in 1921, The Catholic Association for International Peace in 1927, and World Peaceways, in 1931. It is said that whereas some 120 organizations for the study of international questions had existed in 1914, there were about ten times as many in 1926. These newer peace organizations have shown a more realistic methodology. World Peaceways particularly has been distinguished by its habit of using in the case of peace the most effective publicity devices such as magazine advertising and the radio.

The newer peace movement is gradually learning to overcome some of the mistakes of the past. There has been a tendency to overlook or to underestimate the glamor which war has often had for the great masses of the people. War provides many plain people with an opportunity to escape from their drab lives and to find excitement and opportunities which they failed to find in peace. It is necessary to make such people take a more realistic attitude and to understand something about the full horror of war.

Also the peace movement has failed in the past to give due weight to the economic motives in war. Certain of these causes are more or less inherent in the present type of capitalism. Among the tragic consequences of economic domination, for example, is the clash between states leading to international war. Pope Pius XI wrote about it as follows:

This latter arises from two causes: because the nations apply their power and political influence, regardless of circumstances, to promote the economic advantages of their citizens; and because, vice versa, economic forces and economic domination are used to decide political controversies between peoples.<sup>15</sup>

Then too, competition for world markets has led to jingoism. Munitions manufacturers have deliberately worked against the cause of peace by blocking disarmament and encouraging excessive rearmament. It is only as the peace movement gives due weight to such causes of war that it can become truly effective.

*International Organization.* Pope Benedict XV said:

When all will be restored according to the order prescribed by justice and charity and nations will be reconciled, it is most desirable that all States, putting aside all their mutual suspicions, unite to form only one society, or even better, one family both for the defense of their respective liberties and the maintenance of the social order.<sup>16</sup>

These words express an obvious truth. One cannot hope for a very permanent peace until there is some sort of international organization to preserve law and order among nations. Such an organization existed in the Middle Ages in an informal way, when all Christian peoples were looked upon as belonging to the family of nations constituting Christendom, the Pope being their spiritual adviser ready always to decide the moral issues involved in international relations. The system did not work perfectly, but it was responsible for some definite gains.

In modern times, there have been some advances in the direction of international organization. The League of Nations advocated by President Wilson was formally created on Janu-

<sup>15</sup> *Quadragesimo anno.*

<sup>16</sup> Encyclical, *Pacem, Dei munus pulcherrimum* (Peace and Christian reconciliation), May 23, 1920.

ary 10, 1920, when the Treaty of Versailles took effect. Beginning with forty-two member nations the League grew to sixty in 1935, but had declined to fifty in 1941. The League exists to promote peace and international coöperation. Although it has been far less effective than idealists had hoped, its achievements must not be underestimated. The League adopted the Lytton report condemning Japan for unjustified aggression in Manchuria and later condemned Japan for bombardment of open towns in China. The League applied economic sanctions against Italy for her aggression in Ethiopia. Although the net result in these cases was little beyond the withdrawal of Japan and Italy from the League, the principle of joint international judgment on the justice of a particular war was established and this was an important gain.

The Permanent Court of International Justice was founded on December 16, 1920, at Geneva by international agreement. The Court hears all cases submitted to it by member nations and also issues advisory opinions on questions submitted to it by the Council or Assembly of the League of Nations. Thus at least a beginning has been made in the settlement of international disputes by judicial methods. Possibly after the present war increasing experience will bring about the increasing effectiveness of such methods.<sup>17</sup>

*Pope Pius XII's Five-Point Peace Plan.* No peace can be permanent unless it is founded on justice. International leagues and courts can be helpful; but they will be helpful only to the precise extent that they base their decisions on sound ethics. It is therefore fortunate that Pope Pius XII in his Christmas message of December 24, 1939, very clearly and authoritatively set forth the essential principles of international justice. He was dealing directly with the great war which had broken out

<sup>17</sup> For a fuller treatment of peace and its promotion see Francis J. Haas, *Man and Society* (New York, Century, 1930), pp. 296-302.



four months previously; but the principles he laid down are of universal application. He emphasized five points.

(1) All nations have a right to "life and independence" which is equally valid whether they are large or small, strong or weak. Success in war, then, is not a sufficient excuse for depriving a smaller nation of its rights. In other words a world order must not be founded on force, but on justice.

(2) Disarmament is a second condition of a lasting peace. Enormous armaments are a constant threat to international tranquillity and nations that are unwilling to coöperate in disarmament do not really want peace.

(3) International institutions should exist to guarantee the observance of treaties. Since peace treaties cannot provide for all the contingencies which may arise after their signing, there should be machinery for revision and for the judicial application of treaty terms in doubtful instances.

(4) "The real needs and just demands" not only of nations and peoples, but also of ethnical minorities should be benevolently examined and met wherever possible even though this involves the revision of existing treaties.

(5) There can be no satisfactory international settlement unless both governments and the people whom they rule are willing to accept as their norm the unshakable rules of Divine Law. They must develop a spirit of responsibility and begin to hunger and thirst after justice.

It is to be hoped that the Pope's peace plan will find wide acceptance when the peace treaties of the present war come to be written. Certainly the nations of the world should now have learned through bitter experience that permanent peace is hopeless unless the sound principles of Christian ethics are observed.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Pius XII and Peace, 1939-1940* (Washington, D. C., National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1940).

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## Chapter XIII

### CURRENT PHILOSOPHIES OF SOCIAL REFORM

THERE CAN be no fundamental solution of social problems without a thorough remaking of the whole socio-economic order. Any treatment of a specific problem which leaves this principle out of account is bound to be superficial. The existing economic set-up makes poverty and unemployment inevitable. To treat poverty by social work and leave the economic system unchanged is not really to face the problem. The disabilities of the Negro reflect a partial and false conception of democracy. To help the Negro by building trade schools and to overlook the issue of Negro suffrage is not getting very far. The causes of crime are rooted in the social order itself. Ten times as many laws and ten times as many policemen will not help matters so long as no attempt is made to reform society.

A discussion of social problems remains superficial if it neglects these questions of fundamental reform. When one approaches the issue of thoroughgoing reform, however, one is apt to be somewhat disconcerted and confused by the wide variety of solutions which have been proposed. These proposals are so diverse and so contradictory that they leave the average citizen somewhat bewildered. It is fortunate that the Church in her divinely appointed capacity as teacher has clarified the issues involved.

Proposed systems of social reform will be discussed under five heads: conservatism, liberalism, communist totalitarianism, Fascist totalitarianism, and Catholicism.

## CONSERVATISM

The word *conservative* comes from the Latin *conservare* meaning "to keep," "preserve," "maintain." A conservative is one who believes in keeping things as they are without any very fundamental change. He will admit that the present order of things is not the very best possible; but he believes that changes, if they come at all, should come very gradually. He is very conscious of the danger of losing the benefit of past gains by making too rapid advances. By and large, the conservatives are likely to be the people who profit by the present state of things. Business men tend to be conservative. So do their followers, the white-collar class which depends on the favor of business men for their jobs. So do successful politicians, lawyers, journalists, who find themselves prospering under the present order and who fear that they will be less successful in a changed order. Some people are conservative through mental habit. Their minds move slowly, and their imaginations are sluggish. They find it hard to conceive of things otherwise than as they are now. Since the goods of the present régime to which he clings are largely material goods, the conservative is likely to be somewhat materialistic in his spirit and outlook. The conservative is less likely to judge issues by general principles than by immediate practical results. His ultimate anathema is the statement that such-and-such a proposal is "bad for business."

Conservatism has been represented in the United States by economic groups like the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, by patriotic groups like the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion and, in the field of politics, by the bulk of the Republican Party. Its viewpoint is expressed in print by most large newspapers particularly by papers like the

*New York Herald Tribune*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. The *Saturday Evening Post* is a conservative periodical of enormous circulation. Ex-President Hoover has been a thoughtful and outspoken conservative. Many business men of national prominence are also typical exponents.

In the field of economics the conservative favors *laissez-faire* or *rugged individualism* as Mr. Hoover once phrased it. Rugged individualism maintains the right of each business man to run his own business in his own way. Government, it holds, must not "meddle" with business. The conservative admits that business is occasionally guilty of sharp practice, but he thinks that these lapses are rare and that the delinquents should be disciplined by business itself unless the misdeed was some such standard crime as embezzlement.

The conservative resents the activities of organized labor. Wages should be determined by free competition, he maintains. Any effort to raise wages by collective bargaining or by minimum-wage legislation is unwarranted in his view. If low wages and unemployment beget poverty, the conservative is unwilling to solve the problem by a realistic readjustment of the wage structure. Rather he turns to philanthropy for a solution. He does not like government relief, preferring private charity whose policies he can better control. He feels that relief standards should not be too high, or poverty will become attractive and people will prefer relief to an honest job. This, he says, would be bad for business.

In politics the conservative is once more a defender of things as they are. Within the governmental system he tends to favor the more unchanging elements. The Constitution of the United States is his particular object of devotion because the Constitution is very hard to amend. He is enthusiastic about the Supreme Court because the Supreme Court has been traditionally conservative and because it is out of the reach of the

voters. He distrusts and ridicules Congress because Congress is a source of change. The conservative has a genuine belief in democracy and civil liberties; but when the orderly process of democracy imposes restrictions on business, he is likely to ascribe these restrictions to the influence of "radicals, foreigners, or other undesirables and enemies of the American system" and he is not too scrupulous in preserving the civil liberties of such "riff-raff." Patriotism in his mind is bound up with a devotion to the present order; to propose radical change is to stamp oneself as unpatriotic.

From the conservative viewpoint crime can be controlled very simply by more severe punishment and more stringent police methods. According to the conservative, criminologists and prison reformers are well intentioned but they are likely to encourage crime by "coddling" the criminal. To the conservative, crime is a problem of the "lower classes." It never occurs to him that sharp practice in the business world has anything in common with the activities of the highway robber or the sneak thief. The conservative opinion on other topics may be stated something like this:

"Education is valuable, but it should be practical and fit the pupil for a job. Religion is a good thing and should be encouraged; it is a fine antidote for radicalism. Sound family life must be upheld. Divorce should be granted but only in exceptional circumstances. The Negro should be helped to better himself, but should be kept in his place."

The conservative viewpoint has the real advantage of preserving past gains. Young but unrealistic reformers are apt to be very impatient with the evils they see about them. They want to begin all over again with a wholly new society. But conservatism realizes how painfully present gains were won. According to the conservative philosophy these gains should not be abandoned until it is almost certain that something better

is in sight. The present scheme of things works somehow, even though it works imperfectly; it should not be put aside for a new scheme which might not work at all. There is some common sense in this conservative attitude.

On the other hand, conservatism is itself unrealistic when it refuses to face some of the facts which characterize the present social order. When millions are suffering from poverty, when millions are deprived of their common civil rights, can one say that the present order works even reasonably well—except from the viewpoint of a privileged minority? Conservatives simply refuse to discuss any really thoroughgoing solution of such problems. That is why conservatism with its timid and slow palliatives cannot be accepted as a philosophy of social reform.

### LIBERALISM<sup>1</sup>

Liberalism is belief in rapid reform through legal means, that is, through labor unions, social legislation, education, and such other methods as are not forbidden by the laws of the country. Thus the liberal differs from the conservative who advocates slow reform through legal means and from the communist or Fascist who believes in rapid reform even by illegal or revolutionary techniques. The motives which prompt the liberal to desire reform are diverse. One wing of the liberal movement is drawn from the intellectuals, professors, college students, and the intelligentsia in general. These people accept liberalism from an abstract love of justice and a desire to help

<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough, this term is used in two different, even contradictory, senses by different writers. European authors often use it to describe the philosophy which refuses to submit to social restraint, especially in the economic sphere. Thus *economic liberalism* means *laissez-faire* economics and this belongs under conservatism in the terminology used here. The papal encyclicals sometimes use *liberalism* in this sense. The other sense of the word is more usual in the United States. It is the sense defined in the text.



the under dog. The other wing includes most of the labor movement. They accept liberalism because they are under dogs themselves. This mixed character of the liberal movement gives it a peculiar flavor. College students rub shoulders with horny-handed workingmen. This association is a wholesome thing. The workers learn theories from the intellectuals, and the intellectuals learn from the workers something about the problems of the proletariat.

The philosophy of the New Deal might be described as liberalism modified by the exigencies of practical politics. Organizations devoted to specific types of social or economic reform may usually be classified as liberal. The American Civil Liberties Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the various peace organizations, most labor unions, particularly those affiliated with the C.I.O., and many other bodies of similar character belong here. Among current periodicals the *Nation* and the *New Republic* probably best express the liberal viewpoint. It is not so common to find the liberal viewpoint in the metropolitan newspapers because newspapers are pretty well controlled by big business. There are some occasional exceptions, for example, papers like the *New York Post*; but the policies of such papers are vacillating. Really consistent liberals are rare in politics because the liberal viewpoint is not always a good vote-getter; but some publicists like the late Heywood Broun have been unswerving in their liberal views.

In the economic sphere the liberals' ideal might be described as *reform capitalism*. In general they believe in the private ownership of most of the means of production but they would like to see public ownership extended, particularly in such fields as public utilities. Liberals believe, however, that the freedom of private management should be sharply limited by government regulation; the right of labor to organize should be

guaranteed by the government; wages, hours, and conditions of work should be regulated. According to the liberal program these measures plus workmen's compensation laws, unemployment compensation, old-age insurance, and health insurance will sharply reduce the amount of poverty, while the remaining poor should be given much more liberal relief than they are given now.

Liberals believe in democracy but they will not admit that the present system of government represents a very pure form of democracy. Courts too often block the expressed will of the people, Negroes are widely disfranchised, and democratic discussion is too often blocked by the conservatives' control of the press and their high-pressure publicity methods. Liberals are very sensitive about civil liberties and are apt to demand such liberties for their bitterest opponents, to the point of quixotism. From the liberal viewpoint patriotism is indeed a virtue; but it should be balanced by the other virtue of love for international justice and for the people of other nations. War is opposed by many liberals often to the point of conscientious objection. Crime should in their view be treated from the viewpoint of the new penology and the misdeeds of the white-collar criminaloid should not be excused.

Liberals believe in education, even in *liberal* education, though the coincidence of names is purely accidental. They are apt to favor easy divorce and birth control. Birth control seems rather out of place among the tenets of liberalism; for it is a favorite doctrine of some powerful industrialists and large taxpayers, who wish to extend it among the "lower classes." Generally speaking, liberalism is unfriendly to religion, although many religious leaders are enthusiastic liberals.

Much can be said in favor of liberalism. It faces the facts much more frankly than does conservatism. Its program of reform by legal means is clearly more defensible than the

radical doctrine of revolution. Moreover, very many of the reforms advocated by the liberals are just and are recognized as such by Catholic thought. On a hasty reading one might mistake some of the papal encyclicals for defenses of the liberal position.

Liberalism's most glaring defect is its lack of a unifying underlying philosophy. Lacking such a basic theory, liberals are likely to be a bit vague in their proposals for thorough social and economic reform. They criticize modern capitalism and criticize it bitterly; yet what do they offer in its place? Communists and Fascists not only criticize; they have definite substitute proposals. The best liberals can do is to advocate a reform here, another reform there, without really touching the basic issues. This is futile. Social problems can be palliated by such partial measures; but fundamental solutions can come only from fundamental social reconstruction.

The liberal differs from the conservative bourgeois capitalist in that he has a more realistic social insight and a keener sympathy for the underprivileged masses. Yet fundamentally the two men have much in common. They both lack spiritual enthusiasm and any deep or real interest in religion. They are both inclined to measure success in terms of material prosperity. Liberalism and conservatism both developed from the cold self-conscious naturalism of the late eighteenth century. However they differ on current questions they are spiritually akin. No wonder the liberal can suggest no better socio-economic order than a patched-up capitalism!

#### THE COMMUNIST'S VERSION OF TOTALITARIANISM

The communist and the Fascist both advocate the totalitarian state, that is, a state whose highly centralized government is in the hands of one political party which systematically

suppresses all opposition. The typical totalitarian state demands the complete and unquestioning loyalty of its citizens not only in the civil sphere but in all other spheres as well. Education, family life, business, art, literature, even religion—all must be completely subordinate to the purposes of the State and are tolerated only in so far as they become and remain subordinate. Such tyranny may appear very unattractive; and so indeed it is. Yet totalitarianism does at least promise efficiency. It promises to mobilize this efficiency for success in diplomacy and war and thus attracts the support of ultranationalists. Moreover, it promises measures of relief to the oppressed masses and thus gains the support of men who have been neglected by the capitalist democracies and who, therefore, feel that they have nothing to lose. The spread of totalitarianism is not altogether unintelligible.

It is not always easy to draw a sharp line between the communist and Fascist brands of totalitarianism. The two have much in common in spite of the bitter opposition between them which characterized the 1930's. In a general way, then, it may be said that communism draws its support from the proletariat, the working classes, while Fascism depends rather on the lower middle class. Each reflects the prejudices and the enthusiasms of the class from which it springs. Then, of course, the fact that communism grew up in Russia while Fascism developed in Italy and Germany, gives a certain characteristic flavor to each of the two movements.

In the abstract communism may be defined as a socio-economic system involving the common ownership and control of the means of production with the aim of distributing the national income with some sort of equality among all the people. Communism, therefore, involves very severe restrictions on the right of private property with a consequent loss of opportunity for private initiative. In the concrete, however,

communism may be defined as the socio-economic system of the Communist Party as exemplified by its activities in Soviet Russia. These two definitions do not contradict each other; but the concrete definition of communism as Russian communism involves a multitude of particular tenets and attitudes which do not necessarily flow from the abstract definition.

Since the present book deals with social problems in the United States communism is considered only as it exists here. The Communist Party with headquarters in New York follows the "party line" of the Communist Internationale and is frankly linked with Soviet Russia. It claimed a membership of 80,327 in 1941. This total refers to party members in the strict sense. It does not tell how many people in this country accept the principles of communism. Some light may be thrown on the question by election returns. In the presidential election of 1936, there were 80,159 votes cast for the communist candidate. In 1932, the corresponding figure was 102,991. The 1940 figures are not enlightening, since twelve states barred communists from the ballot. In congressional elections the votes are much smaller, 27,781 in 1938 for example. These election results presumably understate by a wide margin the real strength of communist sentiment. Some communists do not vote the communist ticket, on the theory that it is throwing away one's vote to vote for a candidate who has no real chance of election. It is probably true that the real influence of communism in this country is several times the eighty thousand claimed as party members. Moreover, communists often show an enthusiasm and a tactical cleverness which enormously multiply their effectiveness. On the other hand, one should beware of the exaggerations of the conservatives who for selfish reasons brand as a communist many an honest labor leader whose principles are milder than those of the encyclicals.

As was said above, communists stand for State ownership

and control of the means of production. Since the realization of this goal in the United States seems a long way off, communists busy themselves with more immediate objectives. Many of these objectives overlap with the objectives of liberalism, whence the two movements are often confused in the popular mind. Indeed communists assert that they favor some social reforms which have the full approval of Catholic thinkers. Thus they often claim to work for collective bargaining in industry, social justice for the Negro, and the maintenance of civil liberties. They have been active in peace propaganda, but, it must be said, only at such times as international peace fitted in with the plans of Soviet Russia. Such superficial resemblances, however, must not blind one to the certain and unmistakable difference between the communist program and genuine social reform, even when communists agitate against real social abuses. Their real purpose, according to their own program, is to stir up discontent and thus bring the revolution which they hope for one step nearer.

The real nature of communism is clearly revealed by an examination of its basic philosophy. For communists oppose all religion with a fierce fanaticism and violence. Communism would destroy all the foundations of family life. Moreover, it offers in return no positive philosophy of life other than the same emphasis on material prosperity which it shares with the most conservative capitalism. It has often been said with truth that the spiritual affinity between the communist and the materialistic capitalist is much closer than appears on the surface. Both of them want material success for a particular social class. The difference is only that the capitalist wants the lion's share of the national income for his own class, the capitalist class, while the communist wants the lion's share for *his* class, the proletariat.

To form a just opinion of communism it is necessary to give

due consideration to the claims of its sympathizers as well as to the charges of its critics. On the credit side therefore it should be noted that the communists are realistic in some of their trenchant criticisms of existing social conditions. Individual communists have often been generous in helping the underprivileged. This is to their credit; but, after all, it is a credit which they share with all other groups except the most casehardened conservatives. On the other hand there is a good bit of hypocrisy in even these activities. As communism is a philosophy of expediency, deception is a basic communist strategy. Communists have systematically capitalized the grievances of honest workingmen, not to improve the status of labor but for their own selfish ends. Not social justice, but party opportunism has been their principle of action. This became so patent after the German-Russian pact of 1939 that many of the more decent American communists realized their mistake and abandoned the party.

The communist remedy for the ills of society is far, far worse than the disease. For the sake of reforming certain real evils, communists ask Americans to give up their religion, their liberty, and their home life, and to render an unquestioning obedience to an irresponsible dictator. As the Popes have pointed out, the basic error of communism is its materialistic philosophy of life which denies the existence of God and His sovereignty over human beings and excludes all belief in a life to come in which men will be rewarded or punished for their actions in this life.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE FASCIST'S VERSION OF TOTALITARIANISM

Strictly speaking, the term *Fascism* refers to the principles of the Italian Fascists, a party organized in 1919 which took

<sup>2</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*, paragraph 119, *Divini Redemptoris*, paragraph

over the government of Italy in 1922. The word is used more broadly for all those systems of political and economic philosophy which more or less resemble those of the Italian Fascists. In this broader and somewhat loose meaning it may be used to include the system of the *Nazis* (National Socialist German Labor Party) which since 1933 has been in control in Germany. In the present treatment the word is used in this broader sense. This is not to deny that there are real differences between the Italian Fascists and the German Nazis. In particular the latter have been much more aggressively and openly anti-Catholic. One is permitted to doubt, however, whether the Italian Fascists' willingness to coöperate with the Church in certain ways is dictated more by real conviction than by considerations of expediency. In any case there is enough similarity between Italian Fascism and German Nazism to permit the two to be treated here together.

Both in Italy and in Germany the Fascists won over a great many people by their proclaimed bitter opposition to communism. Many thoughtful commentators, however, remarked on the fact that there seemed to be little difference in the fundamental spirit and principles of communism and Fascism. This viewpoint was confirmed by the German-Russian non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939 and the coöperation of Russia and the Fascist powers during the early part of the present war. It was interesting to see how this coöperation was reflected in the abandonment of ideological controversy between the two groups throughout the world as long as the military alliance lasted. Communism and Fascism resemble each other in their suppression of civil liberties and their centralization of all government in the hands of a single political party which, in turn, is responsible to a single dictator. They resemble each other also in that all business is socialized or at least very strictly con-



trolled by the government. Finally, they resemble each other in their demand that all the aspects of their followers' lives shall be subordinated to the will of the party.

The two systems show some striking differences, however. They reflect the prejudices of different socio-economic classes. Whereas communism shows the psychology of the proletariat, Fascism shows the psychology of the lower middle class. Fascist prejudice (including Nazism under the term) particularly manifests itself in racism, nationalism, and an opposition to the intelligentsia. Racism is the theory that one's own race is inherently superior to others and that it should dominate others. In Fascist countries racism works itself out particularly in a bitter persecution of the Jews. Beginning in Germany, the persecution has now spread to Italy. Fascists try to justify their anti-Semitic campaign by theories about the inborn inferiority of the Jews. Of course, there is no justification for such an attitude.

Fascist nationalism comes to light particularly in the form of militarism. War is exalted and idealized. A great many internal needs are neglected so that the national revenue may be diverted to the creation of a huge war machine. Systematic propaganda stirs up national feeling about real or imagined wrongs. Such exaggerated nationalism is obviously inconsistent with the teachings of the Church. While Catholic theology recognizes the possibility of a just war, it most certainly does not justify the systematic glorification of war.

Fascist anti-intellectualism causes a distrust of the intelligentsia and a systematic opposition towards all "advanced" ideas in art, architecture, and the like. This, of course, is not a serious sin of Fascism, particularly since many of the activities of the self-styled intelligentsia are open to justified criticism. But when Fascist anti-intellectualism invades the uni-

versities and when scholarly research is prostituted to the service of a political party, then the seriousness of the situation becomes evident.

An interesting feature of the syndicalism of Italian Fascism is that it shows certain resemblances to the corporate order advocated by recent Popes. In his encyclical, *Quadragesimo anno*, Pope Pius XI commented favorably on this point without mentioning Italy by name. He pointed out the special advantages of a form of organization calculated to bring about the peaceful collaboration of various economic classes under the beneficent supervision of the State. The Pope made it clear, however, that he was not approving the system as it actually worked out in Italy; for he went on to say:

We feel bound to add that to Our knowledge there are some who fear that the State is substituting itself in the place of private initiative, instead of limiting itself to necessary and sufficient help and assistance. It is feared that the new syndical and corporative institution possesses an excessively beaureaucratic and political character, and that, notwithstanding the general advantages referred to above, it risks serving particular political aims rather than contributing to the initiation of a better social order.

What has been said above applies to European Fascism rather than to Fascism in the United States because in this country Fascism is not a really organized movement. Whereas communism is here a political party with recognized leaders who can state authoritatively the aims of communism in America, the same cannot be said of Fascists in this country. In the United States Fascism is a spirit rather than a party. It is not nationally organized. It is, however, possible to state that the Fascist spirit in this country tends to crystallize around certain nuclei. It would be unfair to call most of the resulting groups *Fascist*. At most they might be called *Prefascist*; for they are groups which show something of the Fascist spirit

and may some day coalesce into a true Fascist party in this country.

The following Prefascist groups should be noted: (1) A few notorious German-American groups which frankly accept the principles of German Fascism. Of course, it would be entirely unfair to imply that these groups represent the typical spirit of Americans of German descent. (2) The coercive features of Fascism in the field of industrial relations are reflected in the attitude of a few American industrialists who shamelessly use violence in labor disputes. Consider for example, the notorious *Mohawk Valley Formula*. (3) Fascist racism has its American counterpart in the obviously unjust treatment of the Negro in the United States. Here such groups as the Ku Klux Klan belong as Prefascists. (4) A militaristic American nationalism, which is not much different from its European equivalent, appears in the activities of certain ultra-patriotic organizations which preach extreme militarism in America. (5) Finally there are demagogic advocates of social reform who show something of the Hitler spirit by their intolerance, their appeals to class prejudice, and their outspoken impatience with the orderly methods of democratic government.

Fascism, like all false systems, has its elements of truth. This was pointed out by Pope Pius XI. By means of a national organization of capital and labor under the legal recognition of the State, Fascism obtains certain advantages of efficiency in economic life. Thus it is possible to plan production in such a way that unemployment will be eliminated or drastically reduced and the products of industry will be more equitably distributed. These advantages, however, are bought at a price which most Americans would consider too dear. Democratic liberties would be sacrificed to the will of a dictator. The evils

of militarism and racism follow. Even though some forms of European Fascism have been outwardly favorable to the Church, the state absolutism which this system involves is logically incompatible with Catholic teaching. It is a notorious fact that the Church has been cruelly persecuted in Germany. To the price of Fascism, then, should be added the possibility of an anti-Catholic persecution. Surely this is too high a price to pay for any material benefit of Fascism. The problem now is, how to reconcile the advantages of a planned economy with the democratic ideals of freedom and justice. The Catholic position offers a solution to this problem.

### SOCIAL CATHOLICISM

The Catholic Church insists on just government; but she has no preferences among the various possible forms of political organization by which this just government is to be obtained. Catholic political philosophy will approve of either a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a democracy, as long as it governs justly and is desired by the people. By *just government* is to be understood one which protects individual rights and maintains the common good. Just administration of government in the United States, for example, would imply a decent respect for the rights of the Negro, the Jew, the foreign born, all of whom would be treated equally before the law. Just administration would also imply that no selfish group, such as a political machine or economic class, would have undue influence in making, administering, and enforcing laws.

The Catholic Church has never committed herself in favor of one form of government rather than another; yet it may be argued that under modern conditions the justice on which the Church insists is most likely to be obtained under a democracy. After all, there is not much choice. Real monarchy has practically died out in western civilization. There remain only

dictatorships like Italy, Russia, or Germany and democracies like England and the United States. It does not seem very far-fetched to argue that the democracies, in spite of their patent defects, are distinctly more likely to govern justly and thus fulfill the demands of Catholic political philosophy.

Besides insisting on just government, the Popes have laid down another very pertinent principle. As much importance as possible is to be given to voluntary groups.

The State should leave to these smaller groups the settlement of business of minor importance. It will thus carry out with greater freedom, power, and success the tasks belonging to it, because it alone can effectively accomplish these, directing, watching, stimulating and restraining, as circumstances suggest or necessity demands.<sup>3</sup>

In the field of economics the Church demands justice just as she does in the political field. This justice is practically unattainable under *laissez-faire* capitalism for reasons already given. A planned economy is necessary; but who shall do the planning? Shall it be the State as in Russia or Germany? The answer to this question is contained in the last paragraph. The State ought not to do what can be done by voluntary groups; and the problem of economic planning is one which such voluntary groups can solve particularly well. The reason for this last statement ought to be plain. The modern economic world is complicated in the extreme. A government would have to be superhuman in its wisdom to handle all these details intelligently. But what one centralized government cannot do, a hundred voluntary groups can do, if each works in its own specialized field.

The Church favors an economic system which involves intelligent planning by voluntary groups which the State supervises but does not dominate. What should these groups be?

<sup>3</sup> *Quadragesimo anno*.

The Church answers that they should be occupational groups, organized according to each major product or service, each group consisting of all the employers and employees in a given industry speaking through their freely chosen representatives. For solving the common problems of an industry, employers and employees would meet together with representatives of the government. For discussing their own peculiar problems, employers and employees would meet separately. Thus the decisions on wages, hours, prices, and output for each industry would be made by the men best able to do this on account of their specialized and expert knowledge. To preserve a just balance in wages, hours, prices, and output among all industries, there would be a sort of supercouncil in which the freely chosen representatives of each industry would meet to plan in common the economic policies of the whole nation. The State, as representing the welfare of the whole people, would participate "directing, watching, stimulating and restraining" for the common good.<sup>4</sup>

The Catholic proposal for economic reconstruction would not be the same in all details for all countries. It would require intelligent adaptation to local needs. It would not be fool-proof; but at least it is a plan by which men of good will could coöperate successfully for the creation of a decent society in which enormously widespread unemployment and cruel contrasts between riches and poverty would not exist. The phrase *men of good will* should be emphasized. Good will is absolutely essential. Without this spirit no system will work.

Successful social reform requires men of good will, men who are generous enough to think of others as well as of themselves. How can citizens like that be created, both as leaders and throughout the nation? Only in God's way—by using the

<sup>4</sup> Francis J. Haas, *Jobs, Prices, and Unions*, pp. 26-29.

supernatural means of sanctification which He has committed to His Church for the benefit of mankind.

If we examine matters diligently and thoroughly we shall perceive clearly that this longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit, from which multitudes engaged in industry in every country have unhappily departed. Otherwise, all our endeavors will be futile, and our social edifice will be built, not upon a rock, but upon shifting sand.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Catholic viewpoint, then, personal reform must precede social reform. This is a profoundly important fact. It means that the reconstruction of the social order is not a question merely of politics and economics. It is also and even primarily a question of personal virtue. There can be a better society only when there are better citizens. There can be better citizens only through an increasing use of the means of grace, prayers, the sacraments, above all the Holy Eucharist, the sacrament of love, through which Our Lord intended to unite all men in ardent charity within the unity of His Mystical Body.

Catholic social reform, then, must begin with the propagation of charity. Men must learn to love one another. Under the influence of charity many social problems will begin to disappear. Interracial hatred, interclass hatred, international hatred, will melt away. With this renewed spirit of fraternal charity men will be able to face the complicated problems of economic adjustment; but they will face them in a mood of coöperation, not in a mood of bitterness and resentment. When men are willing to face problems in this conciliatory spirit of give-and-take, even the intricate complications of the modern economic set-up can be gradually worked out on a basis mutually satisfactory to employers and employees and to all the people.

<sup>5</sup> *Quadragesimo anno.*

The social order proposed by the great social encyclicals is an attractive ideal. The harmonious functioning of the economic system would assure each family the basic necessities of life. Unemployment would be largely eliminated by careful planning and the unavoidable residue would be taken care of by unemployment compensation and Christian charity. The old, the infirm, the ill, would likewise receive the needed care. Family life would flourish under the protection of wise laws. There would be no cruel distinctions between race and race. International complications would be worked out amicably by arbitration and mutual concessions. Such a world would be a happy world to live in. It would be heaven on earth. People can have such a world if they want it badly enough to make the necessary sacrifices. Some social problems are inevitable, due to the weakness of human nature. But the present exacerbated and widespread problems are not necessary. They can be solved if Americans are willing to pay the price. There can be a better social order. The significant question is, Do Americans want it intensely enough to make the required sacrifices?

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See the following books on social Catholicism in addition to those mentioned in previous bibliographies: BRAUER, T., *The Catholic Social Movement in Germany* (Oxford, Catholic Social Guild, 1932); BREHMER, R. G., *Social Doctrines of the Catholic Church* (New York, Putnam, 1936); CIVARDI, L., *A Manual of Catholic Action* (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1936); DAWSON, C., *Religion and the Modern State* (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1935); DAY, D., *From Union Square to Rome* (Silver Spring, Maryland, Preservation Press, 1938); HOFFMAN, R. J. S., *The Will to Freedom* (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1935); MCENTEE, G. P., *The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain* (New York, Macmillan, 1927); McNABB, V. J., *Nazareth or Social Chaos* (London, Burnes, Oates, and Washbourne, 1933); MARITAIN, J., *Freedom in the Modern World* (New York, Scribner, 1936); MEYER, J., *The Social Ideals of St. Francis* (St. Louis, Herder, 1938); PRINCE, J. F. T., *Creative Revolution* (Milwaukee, Bruce, 1938); ROBBINS, H., *The Sun of Justice* (Scotch Plains, Sower Press, 1938); and CALLAN, C. J. (ed.), *A Call to Catholic Action* (New York, Wagner, 1935).

The student will find Catholic periodicals useful for keeping up to date on the Catholic viewpoint. *The Sign* is an excellent monthly. The *Ecclesiastical Review* is useful for authoritative statements on points of doctrine. Fr. Gillis' editorials in the *Catholic World* have provided a pungent running comment on current affairs for many years. The *Commonweal* and *America* are excellent weekly reviews. *Social Action* is particularly good on labor news. The viewpoint of an important group is expressed in *Social Justice Review*, formerly *Central-Blatt and Social Justice*. The *Catholic Worker* is the outspoken organ of an important lay movement. Many others might be added to the list. Finally, the Social Action Series of pamphlets published by the National Catholic Welfare Conference is sound, authoritative, and informing.

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